

**Case Study**

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**Operation Modulus: putting  
Christie into practice in Gorbals**

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**What Works Scotland** (WWS) aims to improve the way local areas in Scotland use evidence to make decisions about public service development and reform.

We are working with Community Planning Partnerships involved in the design and delivery of public services (Aberdeenshire, Fife, Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire) to:

- learn what is and what isn't working in their local area
- encourage collaborative learning with a range of local authority, business, public sector and community partners
- better understand what effective policy interventions and effective services look like
- promote the use of evidence in planning and service delivery
- help organisations get the skills and knowledge they need to use and interpret evidence
- create case studies for wider sharing and sustainability

A further nine areas are working with us to enhance learning, comparison and sharing. We will also link with international partners to effectively compare how public services are delivered here in Scotland and elsewhere. During the programme, we will scale up and share more widely with all local authority areas across Scotland.

WWS brings together the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, other academics across Scotland, with partners from a range of local authorities and:

- Glasgow Centre for Population Health
- Healthcare Improvement Scotland
- Improvement Service
- Inspiring Scotland
- IRISS (Institution for Research and Innovation in Social Services)
- Joint Improvement Team
- NHS Health Scotland
- NHS Education for Scotland
- SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations)

This is one of a series of papers published by What Works Scotland to share evidence, learning and ideas about public service reform.

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## Executive summary

As part of its exploration of public service reform What Works Scotland carried out an evaluation of Operation Modulus, a highly successful, innovative, award winning violence and anti-social behaviour intervention targeted at a gang of young people in the Gorbals area of Glasgow, exploring why it was such a success. The aim of this case study was not to focus on how best to tackle issues related to young people and crime, but rather to show how the principles of public service reform as highlighted by the Christie Commission (2011) can best be operationalised. Operation Modulus is an exemplar of such reform, demonstrating what it means for public services in Scotland to put Christie into practice.

What Works Scotland worked with some of the key individuals involved with Operation Modulus to identify what worked with developing and implementing the programme, and to draw out the lessons for wider public services in terms of what made it a success. The following elements were essential:

- Leadership to instigate the partnership, and a collaborative leadership style to enable the partners to work successfully together.
  - The most effective leader for a partnership intervention may come from outside the traditional 'lead agency'.
  - Occupational jurisdictions may be challenged in innovative partnerships.
  - Collaborative leadership supports partners to sustain their partnership work.
- Sustained partnership working.
  - Partnership working takes time to plan and work through differing traditions.
  - Partnerships are dynamic; as programmes unfold, some partners drop out and new partners join in.
  - Each specialisation in a successful partnership is needed.
  - Getting the private sector engaged with partnerships is a big challenge.
- Co-producing the programme with the young people and treating the young people as holding assets.
  - Co-production is compatible with nurturing responsibility and so helps with the sustainability of interventions.
  - Asset-based working helps to develop alternatives that are meaningful to people, supporting them to improve their circumstances.

- A focus on outcomes.
  - Focusing on outcomes can both challenge and unify a partnership.
  - In order for people to be able to actualise change, public services need to actively facilitate meaningful alternatives to peoples' current circumstances.
  - Focusing on improving outcomes for some members of a community can benefit all members of a community.

The intervention prioritised prevention and resulted in the reduction of costs, with very significant savings to be expected in housing, criminal justice, health and other public services.

Partnership, co-production and an outcome-focus are foundational to the Christie Commission (2011). This case study shows how these can be successfully put into practice. The role of leadership, and of leadership style, is underplayed in Christie. This evidence demonstrates that leadership is an additional essential element of successfully 'operationalising Christie'.

*I think what's important ... is the approach and the way partners are working together. It's the way they're joint resourcing, utilising existing funding and by targeting those most at risk and often causing the highest impact on our communities. This approach is partners working in line with all the recommendations and suggestions that the Christie Commission spoke about. It's not as if I've read the Christie report and go, 'oh we can do that. That sounds like a good idea'. It's not until I implemented the Modulus Programme and then you read the report a year down the line and think, oh that's all the stuff that we did [laugh]. But it's true. (Paul Blackwood, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)*

## 1. The enigma of operationalising Christie

The emerging Scottish model of public service reform<sup>1</sup> is built around four key pillars articulated by the Christie Commission (2011, p.72):<sup>2</sup>

- public services are built around people and communities**, their needs, aspirations, capacities and skills, and work to build up their autonomy and resilience;
- public service organisations **work together effectively to achieve outcomes** – specifically, by delivering integrated services which help to secure improvements in the quality of life, and the social and economic wellbeing, of the people and communities of Scotland;
- public service organisations **prioritise prevention, reduce inequalities and promote equality**;
- all public services constantly seek to **improve performance and reduce costs**, and are open, transparent and accountable.

Christie suggests that implementing and operationalising these elements involves the deployment of a range of different concepts and methods of working. These include:

- asset based approaches;
- co-production;
- partnership;
- preventative spending.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Mitchell J (2014) The emerging Scottish model: Avoiding everything becoming nothing What Works Scotland. <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/WWStinkpiece-emerging-Scottish-model.pdf>

2 Christie Commission, 2011. Report of the Future Delivery of Public Services, by the Commission chaired by Dr Campbell Christie. At: <http://www.gov.scot/resource/doc/352649/0118638.pdf>. Sourced 10 March 2016.

3 E.g. Christie Commission, 2011, pp.28-30; 35-36; 42-45; 54-55 respectively.

The importance of place as a unit for the delivery of services has also become a central theme of the emerging Scottish model of public service reform,<sup>4</sup> with an emphasis on the development of locally designed and controlled services facilitated by Community Planning Partnership processes. The Christie Commission specifically recommended that:<sup>5</sup>

*...public service organisations should work to extend and deepen a local partnership approach, building on, but going well beyond the current community planning partnership model. In particular, there should be a much stronger focus on engaging with people and communities in partnership processes, including the design and development of a pattern of integrated service provision.*

Whilst the Report of the Christie Commission has set down the framework for public service reform there is as yet little evidence of the operationalisation of these principles and this remains 'a key challenge'.<sup>6</sup>

In this case study we focus on how this was done in one partnership programme. Operation Modulus was a highly successful, award winning crime and anti-social behaviour intervention focused on a teenage gang in the Gorbals area of Glasgow. We use this as an exemplar to explore wider lessons about how Christie can work in practice. Whilst, as the case study will make clear, Operation Modulus was not designed with Christie in mind, it has nevertheless followed the principles laid out by Christie, with a focus on co-production, partnership working, asset-based approaches and prevention, leading to cost reductions. It also demonstrates the importance of leadership approaches at strategic and operational levels in putting these principles into practice. As the lead partner in the intervention put it:

*... when you read the Christie Commission report, it's ... following the principles of that report about how partners need to be working differently, need to be sharing resources... Instead of everybody just doing their own thing, because certainly for these individuals, that's clearly not working. And while that's not working, all that's doing is having an economic impact to the city, a demand on resources from fire, police and social work and different agencies. And the costs associated with potential victims of crime from these individuals. (Paul Blackwood, Station Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service))*

We have selected this as a model of how Christie can be operationalised. Whilst the programme itself was targeted at crime prevention, the learning from this case study informs the work of public services in Scotland across all areas of policy and practice. The report documents the key elements that made this programme a success, and incorporates strong use of evidence from the professionals involved. These demonstrate the micro-level activities,

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4 E.g. Christie Commission, 2011, pp.30-34.

5 Christie Commission, 2011, p.45.

6 Mitchell J., 2014. The emerging Scottish model: Avoiding everything becoming nothing. What Works Scotland <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/WWSthinkpiece-emerging-Scottish-model.pdf>

choices, tensions and synergies involved in a Community Planning Partnership 'operationalising Christie'. We hope that the processes identified in this case study will be adapted for use across the public services.

## 2. How the case study was prepared

In putting together this case study we interviewed a range of professionals drawn from the partner organisations involved in commissioning, developing and delivering Operation Modulus. Included are representatives from Fire and Rescue Scotland, Glasgow Community Planning Partnership, Community Safety Glasgow and New Gorbals Housing Association:

- Paul Blackwood, Station Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS)
- Jim Gray, Lead Support Officer, Glasgow Community Planning Partnership (CPP)
- James Crainie, Intervention Worker, Choice Works, Community Safety Glasgow (CSG)
- Kirsty Fotheringham (Head of Housing Services), Julie Macdonald and Winnie Bauld (Area Housing Managers), New Gorbals Housing Association (NGHA).

We are very grateful to the interviewees for their time and commitment to this project.

In the interviews we sought to find out how Community Planning structures were used to coordinate this partnership intervention, and to specify the features which contributed to the outcomes of Operation Modulus. The research focus was therefore on the professionals involved, rather than on the young people at whom the intervention was aimed. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed for interpretation with standard qualitative methodology framing the analysis.<sup>7</sup> What Works Scotland has checked the facts of the case study with the key informants. Responsibility for interpretation, analysis and any errors lies with What Works Scotland.

This publication is aimed at people working for public services, the third sector and the private sector involved in community planning. What Works Scotland may publish separately for academic or other audiences using data from the Operation Modulus case study.

The next section provides a brief overview of Operation Modulus. The paper then moves on to look at the key elements of the intervention, in particular the roles of leadership, partnership and co-production, before moving on to explore the outcomes and their positive relationship to the principles set out by the Christie Commission. It finishes with a series of learning points for strategic and operational officers working for public services.

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<sup>7</sup> Silverman D., 2013, *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook* London, Palgrave



### 3. Operation Modulus – setting the scene

*...how Operation Modulus came about was just purely by chance - by luck - bumping in to a police sergeant from Police Scotland, when I was coming out of Glasgow City Chambers one day. And he says, 'oh you're Fire and Rescue'. He ... introduced himself and he says, 'can you run a fire programme for a group of guys I am dealing with?' And he was telling me that these guys were – in his words – last chance saloon guys... (Paul Blackwood, Station Manager, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service)*

Operation Modulus was a computer-generated operation name assigned by Police Scotland to target a serious problem of gang violence, crime and anti-social behaviour in 2013 involving eleven young people in Gorbals. All of those targeted by Operation Modulus were responsible for a range of crimes and anti-social behaviours which were disrupting the quality of life of the local community and which previous interventions had failed to resolve. These gang members had been involved in a series of crimes, one gang member for example had a profile including: serious assault, racial assault, assault with intent to rob, offensive weapon (brick), street drinking, gang fighting, abusive calls/texts, and a list of fixed penalty notices. Another had convictions for police assault, attempting to pervert the course of justice, breach of bail, breach of peace, gang fighting, serious assault with a knife, fixed penalty notices and more. One individual had twenty-four charges for street drinking. Some members had already served time in Young Offender Institutions. Five of the eleven also had fire-related offences.

The gang members were disengaged from police and other public services. They all lived with their families who had tenancies with New Gorbals Housing Association (NGHA). Prior to Operation Modulus, NGHA's Housing Services Team had initiated conversations with the young people and their families about the ultimate sanction of eviction.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in Glasgow already delivered a generic engagement and intervention programme called Fire Reach, to inform different social groups in Glasgow about the role of SFRS, with exercises to support safety, confidence building, communication and team working. The Police Sergeant that Paul Blackwood met outside City Chambers hoped that this course could be made available to the gang members to help them desist from crime. He sent the Police Scotland gang profiles to Paul and when these were viewed and he saw the criminal offences they were involved in:

*I could have easily ... run a programme for a week for this group. But when I saw the level of prolific offending that these young guys were involved in, I just decided to do something about it and basically bring together all the partners within Glasgow who had a remit for offending or the prevention of reoffending. (Paul Blackwood)*

The SFRS, through Paul, played a leadership role in Operation Modulus, drawing together partners from across the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) to tackle this problem, including public services, the third sector and the private sector. A tailored four-week

programme was co-produced with gang members that were prepared to take part, including the leading gang members, delivered by a range of CPP partners. Mentors worked intensively with the young people involved, during and after the programme. The programme was very successful and, as we later illustrate, led to:

- an 80 per cent reduction in crime related to the individuals in the gang;
- better outcomes for the community, notably a significant reduction in complaints related to the gang;
- better outcomes for the gang members, including gaining trades qualifications and employment;
- significant cost savings for public services;
- ongoing changes in partnership practices and relationships for CPP partners involved;

Underpinning the success of Operation Modulus were:

- planned partnership working facilitated through a collaborative leadership approach;
- a co-productive approach with the gang members to develop a tailored programme building on their interests and assets;
- providing the young people with mentoring and opportunities for training and employment as a meaningful alternative to their existing lifestyle.

Workable alternatives to gang life were created through this process, and this was enough to achieve crime desistance without resort to punishment and the associated cost of prison.

The success of Operation Modulus has been widely recognised. One participant in the programme became Jobs & Business Glasgow Inspiring Young Learner of the Year for 2014. Paul Blackwood won a Police Scotland Divisional Commander's award for Outstanding Teamwork and Professionalism, a prize normally granted to police officers. Operation Modulus was also runner-up in the Glasgow Flourish Awards, 2015.

Whilst the programme itself may not have been unique, the approach adopted was:

*...this project did not invent diversionary activities for young people, it's not the first project to deal with what was effectively a gang. What's unique about this is the partnership model. What's unique about this is that it's broken down barriers, that people are working together in a more cohesive way, in a more integrated way than I've seen before. (Jim Gray, Lead Support Officer, Glasgow Community Planning Partnership)*

There are three particular elements that underpinned the success of Operation Modulus from which all public services can learn: partnership, leadership and co-production. It is to a

discussion of these that the case study now turns, first in the instigation of Operation Modulus, and then in its implementation.

## **4. Leadership, partnership and co-production in Operation Modulus**

### **a. Instigating Operation Modulus: the importance of leadership approaches to achieving successful partnership working**

#### ***i. The role of leadership in instigating Operation Modulus***

It was not a complete coincidence that Paul Blackwood bumped into the Police Sergeant outside Glasgow City Chambers. He had been based at City Chambers for three days a week since early 2013, the outcome of planning between Jim Gray, Lead Support Officer for Community Planning, and the Assistant Chief Fire Officer with responsibility for Glasgow. They wanted to embed a senior member of Fire and Rescue staff within the Community Planning team in Glasgow:

*We wanted to break the barriers between the partners and have a collective approach to community planning. Very keen to get people in who are in, if you like, middle management positions, but potentially may learn a lot from it to apply back into their parent organisation. They're not necessarily full-time secondments or formal secondments but they result in a synergy which we think is absolutely at the heart of community planning. (Jim Gray)*

The aim of this was to provide an outside perspective and look at new ways for CPP partners to work together. As Paul noted: *'... that's a role and an opportunity I embraced because I would again develop my skills further in community planning, community engagement, partnership working, all these kind of things'*.

The role of leadership in activating partnership working was central to this programme and can be seen from its inception in the approaches taken by leaders in the CPP and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

As part of his brief to bring CPP partners together, Paul engaged a range of agencies to address the crime and anti-social behavior resulting from eleven young gang members in Gorbals. He moved outside of the formal remit of a Fire and Rescue Officer and his formal professional jurisdiction, as Paul recognised:

*...it was...well, maybe fairly brave to say, 'right, I'm just going to bring everybody in who's got a remit for this', because Fire and Rescue, we're not really seen as an agency that would be dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour and violence ...*

As Paul became aware of the backgrounds of the gang members the relevance of this work to Fire and Rescue became more justifiable in terms of their narrower service interests, whilst underlining that there were existing gaps in partnership working:

*...as a Community Planning partner ... when I looked at the profiles of these guys, five out of the 11 had fire related offences ... that Fire and Rescue didn't even know about. So to me, that's where I think it's fairly disappointing ... maybe early on we could have had an input to prevent them fire setting again.*

Paul adopted a collaborative leadership style - applying facilitative leadership skills in a co-productive context<sup>8</sup> - to identify and bring together organisations and agencies that had a potential role to play. This became a central feature of Operation Modulus and a key reason for its success.

The decision to lead the project through Fire and Rescue rather than an officer from a more traditional agency, such as community safety or the police, created some tensions across the partners. Concerns were expressed about the competency of Fire and Rescue in this context, alongside disquiet that they were encroaching on other services' jurisdiction:

*Some people initially said 'what on earth is a firefighter doing working on engagement with difficult-to-reach young people?' ... a couple of times I had to say to people '...That's what fire and rescue are about, it's a preventative approach ... it's not territorial, it's not mission creep' ... people said to me 'why aren't the cops doing it or why isn't Community Safety Glasgow doing it ... so I had to say 'well in another area it might be them, because [Paul Blackwood] can't be everywhere at once ... but it needs to be somebody with that skillset, it doesn't matter what agency they work for ...'(Jim Gray)*

It was, however, the style of leadership that was most important to tackling this social problem, rather than the leader being from the service that may have held most professional expertise on the issue to be solved. Paul led in a way that brought the partners together, and used facilitation and mediation skills to co-produce the appropriate direction for Operation Modulus. It is to a discussion of the role of partnership in Operation Modulus that this case study now turns.

## ***ii. The character of partnership in instigating Operation Modulus***

An innovative partnership approach was a distinctive feature of this programme. This section explores how that partnership evolved, who was involved, the tensions raised and how they were managed.

The first meeting of the partnership convened by Paul Blackwood took place in July 2013. In setting up this meeting he invited both local and Glasgow-wide agencies that he felt could contribute to solving the gang issue: *'Some partners who I knew and there were others I didn't know'*. Agencies invited included Jobs & Business Glasgow, Police Scotland and Gorbals Police, Skills Development Scotland, Glasgow Education Services, North Glasgow College, Glasgow

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<sup>8</sup> see Bussu, S. and Bartels, K.P.R., 2013. Facilitative Leadership and the Challenge of Renewing Local Democracy in Italy. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. DOI: 10.1111/1468-2427.12070.

Community Planning Partnership, Glasgow Social Work, Glasgow Community Justice Authority, the building company Sir Robert McAlpine, and three third sector organisations that work with vulnerable young people: Prince's Trust, Venture Trust and Includem. Some of these agencies maintained their involvement throughout the programme, others chose not to become involved, and new ones joined the partnership at a later date.

At the first meeting Paul was able to use his devolved leadership remit alongside the very principle of Community Planning itself to explain both the need for a partnership approach and to defend the legitimacy of his leading on the issue. This exemplifies public service reform in action:

*...it was fairly difficult to get some of those individuals to understand, 'well listen, I'm bringing a community planning issue to the table here, regardless of who's bringing that issue' ... I wasn't for any minute saying I should always be the lead agency to deal with this. But what I was saying was, 'here is an issue ... that's been ongoing for quite a while'... I says, 'there's a social worker at the end of the table here who's assigned to one of these gang members and hasn't met him face-to-face for four months. And for four months, this guy is causing chaos. He's prolifically offending within the community...' And I says, '... if there are difficulties for social work or any other agency to engage, this is where community planning should come in to play, because if it's another agency who ... can have that rapport and can engage, well that's who you need to talk to.'* (Paul Blackwood)

Paul saw it as essential that he challenged assumptions about occupational jurisdiction, arguing that the needs of this group of young people had fallen between the cracks of the competing organisations and that Community Planning principles legitimated a different way of working. He had to take a proactive and challenging role to open up the space for the partners to work together in a new way to solve this problem.

It was not just the occupational jurisdictions that had to be challenged; so too did some of the historic conventions and assumptions about gang members and how issues related to them should be addressed. For example, some initially took the position that:

*"these guys just...deserve to be locked up..." I says, 'that's not going to resolve anything. If they're locked up it may reduce demand on your resources for a while, but they'll go inside and then come out with new skills... they'll still go back in to offending.'* (Paul Blackwood)

These types of challenge required resolution and the principles underpinning the partnership approach which Paul was advocating had to be worked through. As part of achieving this, Paul recognised that he had to make it clear that his own service also had a mixed history in terms of working in partnership:

*So with the agencies giving me that advice, I'm thinking, okay, I hear what you're saying but I'm thinking if we take the right approach with the right manner with these individuals, then it will be effective... And initially having that discussion and conversation with different partners ... 'listen, if we come together, we share resources, we work for a change together cohesively instead of this working and doing our own thing'. [B]ecause Fire and Rescue, I says, we're guilty of that as well ... but listen, see if we truly come together, discuss ... what we're capable of delivering ... then just maybe we can make a success of some of these individuals.*

Paul led collaboratively and created a safe space for dialogue, achieved partly through acknowledging the imperfections of his own organisation.

As the partnership continued to form, dialogue continued, including between agencies' narrow goals and the wider ultimate purpose of Community Planning to improve social outcomes. These differences of view also had to be worked through:

*...that's what I said to the partners ... it's not about keeping your chief executive happy, that you've managed to draw down X amount of millions in funding. And you've delivered 30 programmes over a year... It's about the individuals at the end of this programme... And by the way, you can still draw down your funding. You can still deliver your programme, but it's more effective if you do it with other agencies... (Paul Blackwood)*

In trying to establish the partnership, Paul had to make sure that he was able to draw on the expertise of the various partners involved whilst at the same time creating through his collaborative leadership style a space in which disagreement and conflict were able to be expressed. It is through this that successful partnership and collaboration were born.

James Crainie, an Intervention Worker for Choice Works - a more reactive partnership-based diversionary programme for persistently offending young people delivered by Community Safety Glasgow - played a key role in mentoring the gang members to maintain their involvement in Operation Modulus. He became involved in the partnership early on, and *'right away, I noticed that, this is actually a very good kind of format here...'* First, there was time for partners to plan together: *'... And it takes a bit of time, because you want to make sure you're including everyone...'* Second, the structured approach provided a stronger intervention: *'Choice Works would have achieved something... But ... there's more 'bones' to the Operation Modulus style programmes'*. Third, the variety of partners each played a distinctive but vital role, respecting their professional and organisational expertise whilst working together. He specified:

*...it's making sure that you've got people around about you ... Operation Modulus, I think, succeeds with that... Jobs and Business Glasgow know how to deal with the employment side... Glasgow Life ... know what services to put in there, to engage with*

*people, within community centres, the gym, and clubs, et cetera. And you've got the third sector agencies, who are on the ground, who are actually dealing with those individuals, and families, and the wider community. And then we've got ourselves, who are going in to try and reduce re-offending...*

Not all were comfortable with this approach and despite Paul's efforts some agencies, whose involvement may have improved the programme, did not participate. This was due in some cases to their very specialist remit and funding streams or to a traditional pattern of referrals which conflicted with the partnership approach. One innovative step taken was to invite a major private sector employer to be involved in the partnership. Sir Robert McAlpine, who were at the time building in Gorbals, were approached and asked about the possibility of apprenticeships or employment opportunities for the young people. Paul Blackwood saw that the company had a community benefit clause as part of their work on development and regeneration contracts for the City Council: *'So of course I want to approach them about that. You know, 'if you're doing this, here's a community that would benefit.'* However, the outcomes from their involvement were very limited. For Jim Gray: *'That's a huge barrier to this type of project you can't force employers to employ people ... you've got to sell these ideas to employers, 'this is worth you taking a risk'...'*

Even with strong collaborative leadership, limits to partnership working emerge.

From the start, Operation Modulus sought to gather together the right partners to solve an area-based problem. Through collaborative leadership and dialogue it then supported those partners to actively participate and to lead in their own areas of expertise. This resulted in collective action, seeking to improve a social outcome. The process of planning enabled the partners to have time to talk together and work out their roles before starting the intervention.<sup>9</sup>

Having documented the steps that instigated the programme, the case study now moves on to look at how the initiative was implemented and the outcomes achieved.

### **b. Implementing Operation Modulus: co-production and partnership working to achieve successful outcomes**

Building on what it was that the gang members wanted to do and be as an alternative to gang activities was central to the success of Operation Modulus. The content of the programme was based on the results of extensive discussions with the young people involved. At the outset the partners decided to focus on the leading members of the gang based on the theory that if they engaged, the others would be more likely to follow. Paul visited all eleven young people at home, asking them *'...if you had an opportunity, if you ...wanted to develop the*

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<sup>9</sup> For further evidence on successful partnership working see What Works Scotland Evidence Briefing, December 2015: Partnership working across UK Public Services, at <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/WWS-partnership-evidencebrief-A3.pdf>

*skills, what would that look like? If you had a chance of a job, what kind of job would that be?’*

Taking an asset-based approach he asked them to identify their own interests and skills and what they would like to build on. Paul felt that each young person would need *'something that they're enjoying doing'* as an alternative to the meaning that they got from the gang lifestyle. He asked whether they would voluntarily commit to a course, several weeks long, that would focus on getting them experience and qualifications to help them to secure the type of jobs they wanted. He worked with them and the other partners in Operation Modulus to co-design the course:

*I told these gang members, 'look, we're not here to pander to you. Do anything you want', I says, 'it's a two way thing here ... but what we will try and do is give you skills. Maybe break inequalities that you've faced in your life because you've dropped out of school or where you were involved in crime and we'll develop you that you're on par with other people maybe competing for employment opportunities that are out there.' Because I couldn't promise them jobs or anything like that. But what I could promise them was I would work closely with other partners to try and create opportunities for them, but ultimately it was down to them sticking to the programme, attaining the new skills and qualifications that would make them more employable. (Paul Blackwood)*

Paul explained the notes that he had taken from an interview with one participant and how he used this information to work with the other partners to set up a suitable programme tailored towards the stated interests and skills of the young person involved:

*Full-time job he wants. A joiner, a scaffolder, a bricklayer. So he's given us examples of what he thinks he wants... Would you like to try out a job? Yes. Any manual work [experience] he has...I've marked down. So that's where I think, right, I'll link in with City Building, Land and Environmental Services. I'll see if they can give him a wee taster... I will also pass that information on to Jobs & Business Glasgow and tell them, look, here's what he's telling me he might be interested in. So really have a good thorough conversation with him about, well is that what he wants to do? What are the opportunities that are available in that line of work? And what are alternatives that he might be interested in?*

Paul took the information and provisional commitment from the individuals back to the other partners to discuss what they could provide. Based on his discussions with all the partners and the gang members Paul developed a draft four-week programme and this was shown to the gang members individually:



*'based on what you've told me, what you think ... would benefit your life, here's what it's starting to look like.' [W]hen they were agreeing, 'aye, I think that looks good and that looks exciting' ... I could then leave the programme with them. (Paul Blackwood)*

Week one of the co-produced programme was delivered by Community Safety Glasgow, the second week by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, week three by employment and training partners linked to the types of apprenticeships and trade skills in which the gang members were interested, and week four by Skills Development Scotland and Education Services. The programme was iterative and evolved to reflect the changing desires of the participants, continuing the co-productive and partnership principles and facilitated by Paul's collaborative leadership:

*... City Building and the Skills Academy... [gave] them a wee taster on painting and decorating, bricklaying... I'm saying to the boys, 'this is what you're telling me you're interested in. Here's a taster of it. And, do you still think that way? [A]re you still interested?' So that if they weren't interested, then again we could tailor something for their needs. If they were telling me ... 'aye, look, I've really enjoyed this week, this day, and I loved bricklaying the most', then that gave me a wee, kind of, signpost of what partner I need to engage with. What employer I need to be talking to... [A]nd then I would pass that on to Jobs & Business Glasgow [who] ... started developing them and giving them the Construction Safety Certification Scheme ticket, SNIPPEF, the plumbing certificate, different key trade skills ... so we were, kind of, linking in with the partners to say, 'this is what they're telling me'. (Paul Blackwood)*

Through this co-produced programme, the partners together presented participants with the material possibility of achieving their individually meaningful alternatives to gang life.

Six of the eleven gang members took up the programme, importantly including the leading members. Of the five gang members that didn't sign up for the course, two were already going through the criminal justice system and were subsequently convicted. For the other three, there was a positive 'ripple effect' in real time as those on the programme used social media to inform their friends about what they were doing:

*...the gang members were texting and on Twitter and saying, ah, we were away doing this today ... cutting the roof off a motor or... you know, it was all good stuff and exciting stuff. So the other members thought, 'I want a wee bit of that. I'm missing out on something here'. And they started engaging with the different agencies that the other boys were saying they were working with, Jobs & Business Glasgow and Skills Development Scotland and other people. (Paul Blackwood)*

Two of the six participants had additional learning needs so were unable to pass some of the qualification tests for the trades in which they were interested. Operation Modulus partners from Education Services and Skills Development Scotland signposted them to other agencies

that could deliver the support they needed. As a result, one of the two gained employment as a janitor and the other was being given ongoing support by Includem, a third sector organisation specialising in support for vulnerable young people.

The other four participants gained professional certificates in the trades in which they were interested. One of the four won an award with Jobs & Business Glasgow for Inspiring Learner of the Year. They had all started employment, but this had not been sustained due to a mix of lack of secure opportunities, and lack of fit with their needs at the time. However, Paul Blackwood argued that '*...the important thing is they are signposted, Jobs & Business Glasgow are aware of them.*' They have all now moved much closer to the labour market and have increased potential for work in the future.

The task of keeping gang members engaged with the co-produced programme was led by Jobs and Business Glasgow and Community Safety Glasgow. They provided experienced mentors for participants through and beyond the four-week course. James Crainie explained why this was necessary and how this was done:

*...if they chose to come onto the programme and participate, then yeah, we're there to make sure, right you come along today to attend... getting this balance correct, is quite a hard thing to do as well. You don't want to take their hand constantly, but you don't want to lose them... [B]ecause it's a voluntary programme, you want to make sure that you've explained everything fully, and they totally understand, and they're comfortable and happy about coming along and attending, and being part of it... [Y]ou were constantly going to the door and you were giving yourself that extra time because you knew that individual would still be in their bed, because they are in ... a process of...what we call Playstation hours, staying up all night, and sleeping through the day. So you're trying to break that chain ...*

All six participants have received ongoing mentoring from Jobs and Business Glasgow or Community Safety Glasgow, some of the young people demonstrating changed outlooks on employment choices:

*... some of them have got a different view on the kind of ethics of work as well, that's something that we always incorporated into the programme... The example I would use for that is this kind of tunnel vision, 'I can only do construction, because that's all I've ever seen' ... So, what we provided them with was information on, okay, construction, but we also provided them with information on, 'look there is a lot of other different things out there within construction that you can do. Not just a joiner, not just a bricklayer', Jane [McFadzean, Jobs and Business Glasgow] and her team opened that up ... So, you're not pushing anything to them, you're [saying] 'this is what's available for you, by doing this you could potentially achieve this outcome'.*  
(James Crainie)

There was some 'stick' as well as some 'carrot' to the approach taken. NGHA Housing Services Team had initiated Acceptable Behaviour Contracts with the young people to highlight behaviours from which they must desist. These were signed by the young person, their parent/carer, NGHA and the police. However, NGHA housing officers recognised that Operation Modulus gave them something additional – *'a bit of incentive'* - to offer the young people. Whilst Operation Modulus may be perceived as a 'reward' for antisocial behavior, the Acceptable Behaviour Contract can be seen as a counterbalance to this argument:

*... it's not just about rewarding it, we have to have a hard line. And the hard line was me and [name], we were ... the ones that were saying do you understand the consequences of your actions? ... we would say well, this is where you are, but this is what you could do... it was great to [have] the back up of other things ... it was kind of perfect timing... (NGHA Housing Services staff)*

Co-production enabled the rebalancing of responsibility and ownership of the programme and its outcomes, and so commitment to it by the young people.<sup>10</sup> The Operation Modulus 'backbone' provided a framework for collaborative leadership and partnership working to resolve this social problem, benefitting both the young people involved and the community as a whole.

### **c. Christie-specific outcomes from Operation Modulus**

#### ***i. Achieving better outcomes by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour***

After Operation Modulus, Police Scotland reported an eighty per cent reduction in crime related to the individuals in the gang. James Crainie: *'... for us that was like a golden egg really, you know. The Housing Association were like, 'pew, we've got a break here'. Everybody was commenting on it'*. The NGHA Housing Advisers monitored the change in anti-social activity by the gang; .complaints made to them about the young people *'dropped significantly'*:

*... for weeks and months, they were fighting... graffitiing, they were breaking in. And it was a constant stream... criminal activity, hanging about the back stairs, drug paraphernalia, vandalism, windows being smashed. So all those things had been a regular. But after the meetings there was a significant reduction in the actual criminal activities... (NGHA Housing Advisers)*

The Operation Modulus partners had collaborated together to deliver a targeted, co-produced service aimed at a small number of young people having a disproportionate negative impact on the area. The intervention helped to secure improvements in quality of life for the community in Gorbals as a whole, so implementing the following Christie principle:

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<sup>10</sup> Responsibility is a key principle of co-production, see: Scottish Government, 2015, Analytical Paper On Co-Production Working Paper – Office of the Chief Social Policy Advisor. At: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0047/00477490.pdf>, sourced 10 March 2016.

- public service organisations **work together effectively to achieve outcomes** – specifically, by delivering integrated services which help to secure improvements in the quality of life, and the social and economic wellbeing, of the people and communities of Scotland.<sup>11</sup>

Operation Modulus did not result in ‘fairy tale’ endings for the young people involved. However given the reduction in crime and their movement closer to the labour market, it is hard to see this as any thing other than a success:

*The main thing is, from police and Community Safety Glasgow ... their names are not on the radar any more. So ... you’ve dealt with the problem and assisted the individuals. Okay, they might not be in the job that we hoped they would be in, but the good thing is they’re not offending in the same manner or any manner... So you know what you’ve done has worked... [W]e’ve given them skills and we’ve given them a wee bit of ownership and a wee bit of responsibility of their role within the community as a citizen. And that’s what I think is beneficial. (Paul Blackwood)*

After the programme, and with the decrease in crime related to the gang, Operation Modulus was formally closed. However, further area-based gang-related partnership programmes adapted from the project have since been implemented in other areas of Glasgow.<sup>12</sup> Operation Modulus showed the importance of designing initiatives that take account of the local geographical and economic context, the needs and desires of the participants, and the knowledge of services with which they engage. In Govan, the programme has been led by an officer from the local Housing Association, mentored through the process by Paul Blackwood. The approach of co-producing with the young people involved is being repeated:

*Once we get them on board and signed up, we’ve already had all these conversations ... at Govan Housing Association about the type of approach we’re going to take with public, private and the voluntary sector... And already Govan are starting to think about, right, what opportunities, employment opportunities or development opportunities can we offer as a housing association? So their way of thinking is changing. (Paul Blackwood)*

Employability was the toughest challenge for Operation Modulus. Learning from this, partners in Govan are trying to make the post-programme opportunities available to the participants both more secure and more diverse, notably apprenticeships and employment. Widening opportunities to reflect the individual interests and employment-readiness of gang members in the context of knowing that limited opportunities will be available is an ongoing challenge; public services have limited influence over local labour markets.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Christie Commission, 2011, p.72

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of evidence on ‘scaling-out’ and adaptation see <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/WWS-EB-evidence-review-Scaling-Up-Innovations-June-2015.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Christie Commission, 2011, p.15.

## ***ii. Reducing costs by prioritising the prevention of reoffending***

In retrospect, Operation Modulus was seen by its leading participants as compatible with the principles of the Christie Commission. This included in terms of reducing costs by focusing on prevention:

*... when you read the Christie Commission report, it's ... following the principles of that report about how partners need to be working differently, need to be sharing resources... Instead of everybody just doing their own thing, because certainly for these individuals, that's clearly not working. And while that's not working, all that's doing is having an economic impact to the city, a demand on resources from fire, police and social work and different agencies. And the costs associated with potential victims of crime from these individuals. (Paul Blackwood)*

Importantly this was an initiative that did not involve more money but rather was based on securing better, more efficient working practices:

*... you're not applying to get more money to run Operation Modulus style programmes. Because you've got an existing provision already on the ground. All you're doing is pulling it together a wee bit more, you're streamlining it, I think. [James Crainie]*

This put into practice elements of the following Christie principles:

- public service organisations **prioritise prevention, reduce inequalities and promote equality;**
- all public services constantly seek to **improve performance and reduce costs**, and are open, transparent and accountable.<sup>14</sup>

Operation Modulus has led to significant cost savings. In housing these have included savings on eviction, which can cost between £5000 to £10,000 per case. The intervention has also reduced repairs and maintenance costs, for example graffiti costs about £500 for NGHA to remove. Through reducing offending by high volume offenders, savings will have also been made to policing and the wider criminal justice system. Scottish Government estimates of unit costs of criminal procedures and community services/disposals in 2013-14<sup>15</sup> show, for example, that the average cost of a Sheriff Court procedure is over £8,000, and the unit cost of a community payback order £1,909. There are likely additional significant savings to social work, education and health services, both in relation to the gang members and their families, and also to community members affected by their actions.

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<sup>14</sup> Christie Commission, 2011, p.72.

<sup>15</sup> These data can be found via: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/Publications/costcrimjustscot>, sourced 15 January 2016.

Whilst Jim Gray saw prevention of reoffending as a key outcome from Operation Modulus, he argued that the programme could also provide clues for looking at prevention at a more fundamental level, targeting interventions further upstream:

*We need to learn how do we get further back? How do we get to these guys earlier? How do we divert them before they get into criminal behaviour? Because the minute they do that they make the job hard to help them get a job or for them and their families to resemble some kind of normal family life. How do they avoid becoming institutionalised? I don't have answers to that... I think people need to look at projects like this to help them develop the answer. (Jim Gray)*

This move would be even further in line with the Christie Commission's focus on the need for preventative spending.<sup>16</sup> It raises important questions for public services in terms of their choices about when they intervene to spend public money on improving social outcomes; how they do this in partnership with each other; and how they co-produce interventions with the populations involved.

### ***iii. Working together effectively: cultivating a partnership working culture***

For Community Safety Glasgow and New Gorbals Housing Association, collaborating in Operation Modulus demonstrated the effectiveness of partnership working and led to ongoing changes in their own partnership practices:

*... for ... our organisation, it's opened up a whole new way of looking at how we tackle this. There is a lot of new partners out there that, yes, never worked with you in the past, but I've worked with you now and it's bloody magic. It's the same for them, they'll say, I didn't know yous done that... [F]or example, the next bout of Operation Modulus-style working is with organisations in the Govan area... [W]hen we all sat round the table and explained what we did, I thought ... 'I didn't know you were here, I didn't know you done that...' (James Crainie)*

At New Gorbals Housing Association it stimulated a strategic change in their approach to partnership working to manage housing-related issues. The Housing Advice Team now run a weekly 'hub meeting' involving the emergency services, parks, cleansing, '*...everything that's to do with the area that will have an effect and an impact on people's standard of living within the area*'. They also hold a separate, regular meeting with social work and police, the partnership approach helping them to prevent small problems becoming big issues:

*... that meeting's really useful in terms of finding out what's been going on in the area on a weekly basis, not weeks and months... Social Work can check straight away if one of these kids that's been mentioned has maybe got other issues that we were unaware of... And we get together and we can deal with it... (NGHA Housing Advisers)*

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<sup>16</sup> Christie Commission, 2011, pp. 54-56.

These meetings were now averting costly eviction processes: *‘what we find now as part of the hub is we’re much more involved at an earlier stage. So it doesn’t really get to [eviction] stage now’.*

Even for Fire and Rescue who led the programme, involvement in Operation Modulus had opened up new opportunities for partnership working beyond the programme itself:

*... other agencies were telling me they see the value of the approach that we were taking. It had improved the partnership working between our organisations... [B]ecause we know far more about what their service is capable of delivering and vice versa. I’ve linked in with other agencies now and it’s created other opportunities for my organisation, with agencies that I didn’t know existed or what they could deliver. (Paul Blackwood)*

This single collaboration involving city-wide and area-based CPP partners resulted in changed partnership working practices for organisations involved. New relationships are developing beyond Operation Modulus, opening up potential for achieving better outcomes from future planned interventions. This further operationalises the Christie principle:

- public service organisations **work together effectively to achieve outcomes** – specifically, by delivering integrated services which help to secure improvements in the quality of life, and the social and economic wellbeing, of the people and communities of Scotland.<sup>17</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

This success of Operation Modulus was founded on having a range of different expertise in the partnership, none of whom could have provided the required breadth of interventions on their own. In taking this approach, the partners involved in the programme implicitly followed the principles of public service reform recommended by the Christie Commission. Paul Blackwood:

*I think what’s important ... is the approach and the way partners are working together. It’s the way they’re joint resourcing, utilising existing funding and by targeting those most at risk and often causing the highest impact on our communities. This approach is partners working in line with all the recommendations and suggestions that the Christie Commission spoke about. It’s not as if I’ve read the Christie report and go, ‘oh we can do that. That sounds like a good idea’. It’s not until I implemented the Modulus Programme and then you read the report a year down the line and think, oh that’s all the stuff that we did [laugh]. But it’s true.*

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<sup>17</sup> Christie Commission, 2011, p.72.

Operation Modulus is an exemplar of the operationalisation of the Christie principles. It is area-based and demonstrates effective partnership and co-productive elements, leading to better social outcomes, cost-savings and to learning about cultivating a partnership culture. It also provides evidence on the importance of leadership in instigating these principles locally, and of collaborative leadership in sustaining partnership working.

Whilst Operation Modulus exemplifies a process by which interventions could be designed and implemented it does not provide a 'blueprint'. If partnership interventions are to be spread to other areas this requires not replicating the model but instead learning from the processes of partnership and leadership, and then co-producing the intervention with affected communities.

When asked to reflect on his learning from his leadership of Operation Modulus, Paul Blackwood argued:

*The tips and advice I would give is we always talk about cohesive and collaborative and partnership approaches, but it's integral to those partnerships that you need somebody who's prepared to go a wee bit above and beyond, to engage with individuals, to deal with the core issue in the circumstances of that individual. And as Christie Commission says, it's developing a programme, an initiative with the community, not for the community. It's important that you listen to the individuals who are causing your local authority an issue and basically it's having that, kind of, mentoring role which I think is key ... and it has to be sustained engagement. For best value: ...a more joined up approach, sharing resources, is certainly the way you're going to achieve better outcomes... And expect, you know, disengagement from partners and different agencies who are quite happy to be continuing on in the way they are. But... austerity and pressures on public resources across Scotland, I don't think we can afford to still be working in isolation. We need to be working jointly, putting our heads together and coming up with solutions for community planning issues.*

## **6. Learning points**

Operation Modulus demonstrates leadership, partnership, and co-production animated by Community Planning partners. It exemplifies how CPP partners of every type can make choices to change the way that partnerships happen, so putting the Christie principles into action and demonstrating a Scottish model of public service reform in action.

Below, overall learning points from the case study are summarised, followed by a series of specific learning points for CPP strategic leads and for professionals involved in partnership working.



- The Christie Commission argues that well-designed public services should do the following:<sup>18</sup>
  - **public services are built around people and communities**, their needs, aspirations, capacities and skills, and work to build up their autonomy and resilience;
  - public service organisations **work together effectively to achieve outcomes** – specifically, by delivering integrated services which help to secure improvements in the quality of life, and the social and economic wellbeing, of the people and communities of Scotland;
  - public service organisations **prioritise prevention, reduce inequalities and promote equality**;
  - all public services constantly seek to **improve performance and reduce costs**, and are open, transparent and accountable.
- Operation Modulus is an exemplar of how to develop effective partnership interventions, consistent with Christie. It is a model of a way of working, not a blueprint, and so needs to be adapted to local contexts.<sup>19</sup>
- Operation Modulus was implemented without additional funding by partners, but by partners working in a different and planned way together. It demonstrates how, by taking this approach, public money can be saved.
- A collaborative leadership approach to make partnership working effective and sustained. Creating the space to work through disagreement and conflict was a key component of what made the intervention effective.
- Creating the space for partners to plan together generated a resilient and flexible ‘backbone’ for the intervention.
- The articulation of the programme was achieved by each service using their expertise within the partnership structure.
- Co-production with the people whose lives the project sought to change was fundamental to the successful outcomes, using an asset-based approach focusing on what the young people wanted to be and do as alternatives to gang life.
- Through partnership working and co-production, outcomes that satisfied the singular and collective interests of all partners and of the community were achieved. Better

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<sup>18</sup> Christie Commission, 2011, p.72

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of evidence on ‘scaling-out’ and adaptation see <http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/WWS-EB-evidence-review-Scaling-Up-Innovations-June-2015.pdf>

social outcomes for the gang members and better social outcomes for the community were not alternatives.

- There were sometimes tensions between the specialisms of individual partners, and the achievement of the collective goal of improving social outcomes. There is a need to recognise professional autonomy and distinctive funding priorities, but these can be in tension with the work in partnerships to improve more general social outcomes.
- There is a need for better articulation of the role of the private sector within CPP interventions, to maximise their contribution. Examples of effective practice are needed.

#### **a. The role of CPP strategic leadership in enabling partnership working**

- Operation Modulus happened because strategic leaders in Community Planning and Fire and Rescue collaborated to base a Fire and Rescue officer centrally within the CPP. Other strategic leaders can replicate or adapt this model.
- To enable that officer to lead a partnership intervention outside the formal Fire and Rescue Service remit, the strategic leaders had vested that officer with the autonomy to do this. Strategic leaders in public services can make a step change in partnership work by adapting this model, devolving leadership with a focus on improving social outcomes.
- Operation Modulus shows how strategic leaders in public services have a decisive role in defending and advocating for new types of collaborative leadership by officers in CPP interventions seeking to focus on better social outcomes that cross-cut narrow service interests. They can make the choice to place officers in these roles, and need to collaborate in doing so.
- The principles of Community Planning can be used by any CPP partner to defend and assert their right – indeed duty - to lead on an issue at the edges of their core service remit impacting on social outcomes. Authority from strategic officers for their team members to work in this way will help to embed the practice. Keeping in mind the common goal of improving social outcomes can help.
- Focusing on the common goal of achieving better social outcomes means that each CPP partner contributes at the right level each time, rather than leading on every issue at the heart of their service remit every time. This does not diminish their professional remit, but changes their approach to how they perform their role. Strategic leaders of CPP partners are key in influencing whether this cultural change in public service reform happens.

- Strategic leaders need to facilitate exercises for their teams in how they interpret, apply and lead on following the Christie principles in their work. Strategic leads should collaborate on doing this, so modelling Christie.

#### **b. The role of professionals that do partnership working**

- Officers working for CPP partners need to develop their understanding of the Christie Principles, and how they can use them for initiating and leading on projects seeking to improve social outcomes. Strategic leaders need to facilitate exercises for their teams in how they interpret, apply and lead on following the Christie principles in their work. Strategic leads should collaborate on doing this, so modelling Christie.
- Officers working for CPP partners should expect training and development on the principles and practice of Christie, and put this into action.
- For officers to lead a CPP partnership to improve a social outcome at the edges of their own service's traditional remit requires the support of their service manager. It also needs careful thought about which partners to invite to an initial meeting to plan how to work together to resolve the issue. This may include not only those that formally lead on that issue or have a statutory interest, but others that have a prospective role. The specialist third sector will likely play a role, and the private sector may also be part of the solution.
- Tensions may be heightened when the partner convening a CPP meeting is not the traditional 'lead' partner on that topic; others may question their authority. Officers playing this role should be doing so with the support of their managers and should expect their managers to support them.
- A combination of assertiveness, diplomacy and facilitation is required to bring diverse partners together to tackle a social problem in a new way: collaborative leadership.

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