

Diagnosing Where Power Lies in the Public Domain

Using “vertical slice” group analysis

The diagram below indicates who the players are in community empowerment and where their power is derived from. It also tells us who are the people delivering public and voluntary services and benefits. Change to power relationships tends to grow from real issues on the ground rather than from institutional structures such as local council committees or health bodies. For instance issues such as how safe your community is; or what kind of care you can get if you need; or how good the local school is are the kind of concerns that motivate people. Real aspirations and issues are, similarly, what should be tasking and focussing public agencies. This is where the ‘vertical slice’ comes in. It enables people who share the *same concerns* and desires but have a *different role and stake* to come together, learn from one another, understand each other and create common goals and actions. It enables groups of key people involved in, say, community safety or social care to work together for improvement.

