

# Sheffield Hallam University

*Voluntary sector chargeable support services: A typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy.*

ELLIOTT, Dawn Angela.

Available from the Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA) at:

<http://shura.shu.ac.uk/19614/>

## A Sheffield Hallam University thesis

This thesis is protected by copyright which belongs to the author.

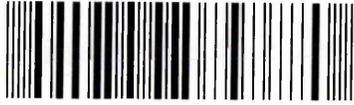
The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

Please visit <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/19614/> and <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html> for further details about copyright and re-use permissions.

Learning and Information Services  
Adsett's Centre, City Campus  
Sheffield S1 1WD

102 112 792 2



**REFERENCE**

ProQuest Number: 10694495

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10694495

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

**Voluntary sector chargeable support services:  
a typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy**

Dawn Angela Elliott

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
Sheffield Hallam University  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

February 2016

## Abstract

This thesis sets out to examine the ways in which actors sitting within local infrastructure organisations (LIOs) consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy against the backdrop of a shifting institutional environment that increasingly favours charging front line organisations (FLOs) for support services that were previously provided free at the point of use. It employs an institutional lens to explore the linkages between actors, legitimacy and a shifting institutional narrative from an actor level perspective, providing insight into the ways in which actors' worldviews of what is - and what is not - legitimate are shaped, and how such worldviews then play out in practice. At a theoretical level, the research advances knowledge in respect of bringing about an understanding of the contemporary changes happening within LIOs in relation to charging for services, particularly from an actor level perspective. At a practical level, the research serves to inform practitioners both within LIOs, and within organisations more broadly, of the frames through which actors consider whether a change (such as a new policy or new strategic direction) may or may not be legitimate, and the ways that those actor worldviews then shape the behaviours of actors, or groups of actors, in practice.

The thesis presents information drawn from a multi-sited ethnography, conducted across four LIOs over a six month period, with six weeks spent at each site. The findings are presented through a typology of thirteen distinct actor worldviews of legitimacy, which are informed by the dominant value set of each actor type, and played out through the employment of ten separate rhetorical strategies, used to argue for their preferred worldview. The typology serves to underpin an eight stage process of actor legitimacy formation and influencing, which shows the stages through which actors consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy at times of institutional shift.

The key contribution to knowledge arising from the research is embedded in how considerations of legitimacy play out at an actor level across LIO settings, in specific relation to actor consideration of and responses to contemporary changes with respect to institutional shifts towards the favouring of chargeable support services. The eight stage process underpinning this contribution also contributes to understandings of how legitimacy plays out at the actor level *per se*, and how actors seek to shape their institutional environment at times of shifting institutional narratives. It does this by developing understanding of the ways in which actors use their worldviews of legitimacy in a bid to further the interests that they believe to be legitimate within their institutional environment. This in turn contributes to debates surrounding how legitimacy plays out at the actor level and how actors consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy.

Further, the typology of actor worldviews underpinning the eight stage process contributes to current understandings of legitimacy both by adding an actor level perspective to the currently available typologies of legitimacy, and by contributing four legitimacy types that are not believed to exist in current literature. These four legitimacy types focus on legitimacy as viewed through a focus on strategy; legitimacy that is opportunistic in nature; legitimacy relating to leadership of the sector or industry, and legitimacy that relates to advancing practice.

## Table of contents

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Candidate's statement  | 4   |
| List of acronyms   | 5   |
| List of tables and figures   | 6   |
| List of appendices   | 7   |
| Chapter 1: Introduction  | 8   |
| Chapter 2: Local infrastructure organisations and their organisational field   | 20  |
| Chapter 3: LIOs, chargeable support services and legitimacy at the actor level: a review of the literature from an institutional perspective | 37  |
| Chapter 4: Methodology   | 72  |
| Chapter 5: The four LIO ethnographies: an introduction to the sites  | 102 |
| Chapter 6: Discussion: actor worldviews of legitimacy  | 127 |
| Chapter 7: Actor worldviews of legitimacy: a contribution to the theory  | 224 |
| Chapter 8: Conclusions and recommendations   | 242 |
| References   | 260 |
| Appendix A: Table comparing the themes arising in the initial exploratory interviews   | 274 |
| Appendix B: Research approach letter to CEOs   | 279 |
| Appendix C: Research participant information sheet   | 282 |
| Appendix D: Copy of email circulated to all staff and volunteers upon arrival  | 285 |

## Candidate's statement

I confirm that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Sheffield Hallam University, for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is my own original work. Chapter 1 outlines the key objective of the research, which is to answer the research question:

*How do actors within local infrastructure organisations consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy surrounding an institutional shift towards charging front line organisations for support services?*

In fulfilment of the research question, the research presents a typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy based against a backdrop of a changing institutional backdrop which is moving from an old institutional narrative that endorsed centralised funding of and consistent provision of voluntary sector support services, towards a new narrative which endorses demand-led or market-based funding and value based on proven efficiency and effectiveness.

My list of references that follows after the main body of work serves to acknowledge the body of literature which I have drawn on in order to complete the thesis.

I confirm that my research is not part of a collaborative group project.

I wish to acknowledge the assistance received from my two doctoral supervisors Gareth Morgan and Tracey Coule, who have provided support, advice and wisdom throughout my programme of study and have provided me with both the skills and the confidence to complete the thesis that follows. I also wish to acknowledge the kindness, love and patience shown to me by my husband Robin Elliott, who has been a grounding force for me throughout my research journey.

## List of acronyms

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| BASIS | Building and Sustaining Infrastructure Services - a Big Lottery Fund programme  |
| BCIL  | Building Capabilities for Impact and Legacy - a Big Lottery Fund initiative   |
| CSS   | Council for Social Service  |
| CVS   | Council for Voluntary Service   |
| FLO   | Front line organisation   |
| LGBT  | Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender  |
| LIO   | Local Infrastructure Organisation   |
| NAVCA | National Association for Voluntary and Community Action - the umbrella body for LIOs  |
| TLI   | Transforming Local Infrastructure - a government initiative aimed at transforming local infrastructure services, of which funding was delivered by the Big Lottery Fund |

## List of tables and figures

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Table 3A: Conceptions of legitimacy in the literature                                 | 43  |
| Table 4A: A summary of the data collected   | 94  |
| Table 5A: An ethnographic comparison of the sites                                     | 104 |
| Table 6A: Thirteen types of legitimacy and their underpinning dominant value sets     | 167 |
| Table 6B: Rhetorical strategies employed by actors                                    | 196 |
| Table 6C: Worldviews of legitimacy, dominant value sets and rhetorical strategies     | 198 |
| Table 6D: A typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy                                | 212 |
| Table 7A: Crossover of legitimacy typologies with actor worldview of legitimacy model | 226 |
| Table 8A: Reflections on overarching terms used within typology                       | 256 |

## **List of appendices**

Appendix A: Table comparing the themes arising in the initial exploratory interviews

Appendix B: Research approach letter to CEOs

Appendix C: Research participant information sheet

Appendix D: Copy of email circulated to all staff and volunteers upon arrival

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Introduction to the thesis and the chapter

Local infrastructure organisations (LIOs) are local level charitable membership organisations operating within a county, borough, unitary authority or district to provide support, development, liaison, representation and strategic partnership services to local level front line organisations (FLOs) in the voluntary sector. Typically these organisations are called 'Councils for Voluntary Service' and are referred to widely as CVS', although similar organisations operating across a rural area may be known as Rural Community Councils. In recent years, the institutional environment within which LIOs sit has seen a shift in institutional narrative. This shift moves away from 'old' ideas supporting centralised funding and consistent provision of support services to FLOs (HM Treasury, 2002; Macmillan, 2006; Macmillan et al., 2007; Harker and Burkeman, 2007), and towards a 'new' narrative which sees the endorsement of chargeable support services operating in a demand-led environment, based on proven efficiency and effectiveness (Macmillan and Ellis Paine, 2014; Munro and Mynott, 2014). As a result, many LIOs are considering or have begun charging for support services that were previously provided free at the point of use. The context surrounding the shifting institutional narratives and the moves towards chargeable support services is explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

Moves towards charging may pose a number of risks to 'legitimacy' (Parsons, 1960; Maurer, 1971; Weber, 1978; Meyer and Scott, 1983a), such as the potential for mission drift (Bennett and Savani, 2011); the risks associated with meeting stakeholder expectations (Zimmeran and Dart, 1998) and the potential exclusion of small FLOs that cannot afford to pay, amongst others. In this thesis I use an institutional lens to explore the linkages between shifting institutional narratives surrounding chargeable support services, and the ways in which actors consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy. Specifically, my research question is:

***How do actors within LIOs consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy surrounding an institutional shift towards charging FLOs for support services?***

The research was undertaken by way of a multi-sited ethnography within four separate LIOs over a six month period. It finds that, when actors perceive a shifting institutional narrative, they consider the legitimacy of potential new narratives through their respective individual 'worldviews of legitimacy', each of which is informed by an associated dominant value set. Further, it finds that groups of like-minded actors with similar worldviews then cluster together to use the perceived instability that comes with the shifting institutional narrative as a 'window of opportunity' to promote their favoured worldview of legitimacy, or negate those of others. They do this through employing a variety of rhetorical strategies, in a bid to drive the shape of their institutional environment.

The primary contribution to theory is the development of knowledge relating to changes currently occurring within LIOs in respect of moves towards chargeable support services, particularly from an actor level perspective. This knowledge is developed through the identification of an eight stage process which explains from an actor level perspective the stages of legitimacy shaping and influencing that actors go through in respect of a perceived change in the institutional environment. This eight stage process is underpinned by a typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, such that actors seek to influence the institutional environment in line with their respective legitimacy worldview. The typology presents thirteen different types of actor and their associated worldviews of legitimacy; the dominant value sets they hold that influence their worldviews of legitimacy, and the rhetorical strategies which they use to promote their respective worldviews or negate those of others.

The findings add new depth to debates surrounding the role of actors and their views of legitimacy at times of institutional shift. The nature of the eight stage process and the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy that underpins it is such that the findings are likely to be generalisable. This is not only at the level of LIOs moving into chargeable support services but also to other voluntary sector organisations moving towards charging, and further, more broadly to

other organisations at times of institutional shift. The eight stage process advances debates surrounding the roles of actors in institutions by providing an explanation for the ways in which actors seek to engage with the institutional environment through their respective worldviews of legitimacy, at times of shifting institutional narratives. The findings address important debates in the literature surrounding the agency of actors from the institutions within which they sit, and the nature of their engagement with, perceptions of and reactions to ideas of legitimacy in a shifting institutional environment.

The findings also further the literature relating to legitimacy at two levels. The first of these is to further the current knowledge base relating to understandings of legitimacy as viewed through the eyes of the actor. There are only a limited number of studies that examine legitimacy from an actor-level viewpoint and this research is therefore important in advancing understanding of the ways in which actors consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy at times of shifting institutional narratives. At the second level, the findings highlight four areas of legitimacy that are believed not to be detailed in the present literature. These four new types of legitimacy advance the current knowledge base in terms of bringing new understandings of the different frames by which legitimacy is considered by actors.

The thesis is structured into eight chapters. This first chapter provides an introduction to the research including definitions of key phenomena; research questions; the research context; and the methodology used. The second chapter uses the literature to establish the institutional context of the organisational field in further detail. Chapter 3 sees a review of the literature relating to the research, with a particular focus on ideas of legitimacy, and the ways in which actors interact with institutions. In Chapter 4, I present the research methodology in full, including details of my pragmatist philosophical approach, and my choice of a multi-sited ethnography to conduct the research. It should be noted that I do not cover my process of template analysis here but instead in Chapter 6, alongside my discussion. In Chapter 5 I present an introduction to the ethnographic sites: this is not an analytical chapter *per se* but is intended to shed enough light on the organisational context surrounding each LIO that the data presented in Chapters 6 and 7 benefit from additional clarity.

In Chapter 6 I offer a discussion of the findings. Here, I describe and discuss the process of my template analysis, and I present a typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, their underpinning dominant value sets, and the rhetorical strategies employed by each actor type to promote said worldview of legitimacy. I then build on this typology of legitimacy to present an eight stage process of actor-level legitimacy narrative shaping. In Chapter 7 I then build on the findings presented in the previous chapter by exploring how they fit with the literature, the strengths and weaknesses of the theory presented, and the overall contribution to literature from the research. Finally, in Chapter 8 I present my research conclusions and recommendations for further research going forwards.

The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows: I begin by defining the key concepts used throughout the research in section 1.2. In section 1.3, I provide key information in respect of the research problem. Following this, in section 1.4 I briefly address my chosen methodology, and explore the pre-knowledge that I bring to the research in section 1.5. Finally in section 1.6 I summarise the chapter.

## 1.2 Definitions

In order to ensure ease of reference throughout, I use the following section to set out definitions for a number of key concepts used throughout this thesis. These include the terms 'LIO', 'FLO', 'actor', 'legitimacy', and 'worldview of legitimacy'.

For the purposes of this research, I use the term LIO to mean:

*A local level charitable membership organisation operating within a county, borough, unitary authority or district, which provides support, development, liaison, representation and strategic partnership services to local level front line voluntary organisations (FLOs).*

This builds on the definitions of Burrige (1990a), Osborne and Tricker (1994) and NAVCA (2006) by combining their respective elements regarding the

geographical reach of LIOs, their characteristics as membership organisations, and their day to day functions. Given the reference to FLOs in this definition, it may be useful here to consider a definition for FLOs also. I use the term FLO to mean:

*A voluntary organisation, which may be formal or informal in construct, that provides charitable or voluntary services or support to a group or groups of people at a county, unitary authority, borough or district level or smaller area. This includes local branches of national charities.*

Throughout the thesis I frequently refer to the notion of 'actors'. I use the term to mean:

*A person operating within a particular institutional environment - including within a specific organisation as an institution in its own right - who to some extent is shaped by the narratives present within the institutional environment of which they are a part.*

In Chapter 3, I will introduce the notion of legitimacy in more depth. Here, for the purposes of defining legitimacy, I turn to Maurer (1971, p361), who provided one of the early definitions of legitimacy. Maurer defined legitimacy as:

*“The process whereby an organization justifies to a peer or superordinate system its right to exist”.*

Whilst Maurer's definition bounds legitimacy in the idea of justifying the existence of an organisation, my definition draws on evidence from the research to note that legitimacy is not only the process of actors justifying their organisational existence, but it can also extend to the actions or direction of an organisation, rather than simply existence. My definition also adds in reference to actors and the self, given my previous assertion of actors' agency in section 1.1. Hence for the purposes of this study, I define legitimacy as:

*The process whereby an organisation, or a group of actors or individual actor within an organisation, justifies to themselves, a peer, or a superordinate system their right for the organisation to exist, act, or follow a particular direction.*

Building on the notion of legitimacy, a major aspect of my research findings presented in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 relates to actor 'worldviews of legitimacy'. Although this concept will not crop up in detail until later in the thesis, I use the term worldview to mean:

*An idealistic conception in the mind of an actor about the way an institutional system of which the actor is a part - i.e. the actor's 'world' - should be.*

From here, I combine my definitions of the terms 'legitimacy' and 'worldview' to provide the following definition of 'worldviews of legitimacy':

*An idealistic conception in the mind of an actor about the way an institutional system within which an actor is a part, i.e. the actor's 'world', should be, in order to gain legitimacy and hence justify to themselves, a peer, or a superordinate system their right for the organisation to exist, act, or follow a particular strategic direction.*

Finally, with respect to the institutional environment surrounding the LIO, I refer to this at three separate levels. First, I draw on Hannan and Freeman's (1977, p166) idea of organisational population to refer to "*classes of organizations that are relatively homogeneous in terms of environmental vulnerability*" - in this instance, LIOs in aggregate. Additionally, I use the term organisational field, which stems from DiMaggio and Powell (1983, p148) and refers to "*those organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products*". In this respect I am referring to the broader institutional environment surrounding the operation of LIOs, including funders; government bodies; the Charity Commission and FLOs. Of the two terms, it is the term organisational field which is used more frequently throughout. I also accept the view (Meyer, 1983; Zucker, 1983) that organisations are institutions in their own right but for clarity, when referring to organisations as institutions in their own right, I will simply use the term 'organisation'.

### 1.3 The research problem

The research problem is grounded in an institutional environment surrounding LIOs which appears to be moving away from centralised funding predominantly from government and from large grant funders, and towards demand-led funding predominantly through the creation of chargeable support services. Services being considered as potentially chargeable include funding advice, development advice, and governance advice such as legal structures or the development of policies and procedures: until recently, such services have typically been provided free at the point of use. The research uses this institutional shift in towards chargeable support services as the backdrop for the research problem, which focuses on how actors perceive, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy against a shifting institutional backdrop. The context surrounding the institutional backdrop itself and the associated changing institutional narratives will be explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

Whilst the shifting institutional environment provides a backdrop for the research, the key focus of the problem being explored is that of actors within LIOs and the ways in which they perceive, consider and respond to ideas of legitimacy in relation to moves towards chargeable support services. The shift towards chargeable support services provides an opportunity to explore actor conceptions of and reactions to ideas of legitimacy in depth. This is because the change occurring within and surrounding the LIO means that actors operating within the LIO are more likely to be considering their perceptions of whether or not the 'new' narrative is legitimate than they would be in relation to a 'business as usual' narrative. The medium of chargeable support services therefore offers an opportunity to explore how actor narratives within LIOs play out against a shifting institutional backdrop.

The research problem is framed at the actor level, taking an approach that is based upon actor perceptions of the institutional environment, and legitimacy as perceived or formulated through the eyes of the actor (as opposed to being perceived or formulated at an institutional level). The research does not,

therefore, explore the two way interactions between the actor and the institutional environment; it explores interactions only from the actor level perspective. Accordingly, it does not take any steps to ascertain any fixed picture of what pertains to be the institutional environment. Instead, the research is bounded through the perceptions of actors themselves in respect of their understandings of and relationship with the institutional environment, and their associated legitimacy considerations in respect of the perceived institutional environment.

Being oriented towards the actor level, I felt it important to study LIOs at the crux of any organisational decisions in respect of whether or not to charge for support services. This is because organisational discussions and deliberations in relation to chargeable support would be more likely to be at the fore in such a setting, and charging therefore would actively be on the minds of actors. In turn, legitimacy considerations in respect of moves towards chargeable support services would be most likely to come to the fore.

The key focus of the research problem therefore is on actors and the ways in which they view, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy at times of a shift towards chargeable support services. It is the backdrop of the change towards chargeable support services that allows for detailed exploration of legitimacy from an actor level, and allows for exploration of the interaction between actors with the institutional environment through their legitimacy worldviews.

#### 1.4 Outline of methodology

The chosen methodological approach was an ethnographic one, which offered a number of benefits which, as described by Fine, Morrill and Surianarain (2009) include the following:

1. The elaboration of informal relations;
2. View of organisations as systems of meaning;
3. Understanding of organisations and their environments;
4. A focus on the drivers of organisational change;
5. An insight into power, politics and control.

I found it important to take a methodological approach which gave insight to these subtle and informal interactions as charging is a contentious issue that may play out in a number of different ways depending on the feelings and reactions of the actors involved. In addition, ethnography offered the ability to gain access to depth and detail regarding subtle complexities in actor responses or narratives that may not be so readily available using other methodological approaches. This particularly allowed for greater understanding of how actor responses to legitimacy considerations in respect of charging played out in practice.

My intention in using an ethnographic approach was to immerse myself into a number of LIOs at a deep level by becoming a part of them and their working patterns and routines. In doing so, I was afforded the ability to observe actor perceptions of legitimacy considerations from the within the LIO due to my proximity to the actors making such considerations. I set out to achieve a trust relationship with actors internal to the LIO, allowing a more complex insight into the power and politics of moves into charging FLOs for support services.

More specifically, the methodological basis of the research is a multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995) which uses the individual perceptions of and attitudes towards legitimacy illustrated within and across four separate LIOs, to examine how actors perceive, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy against a backdrop of a shifting institutional environment. At each ethnographic site, I undertook a six week long volunteering project, centred around helping the LIO move towards chargeable support services in order to establish conversations around charging for services. During the six weeks, I worked with the LIO four full time days a week, in addition to attending additional events as necessary such as staff outings or events held by the organisation.

The processes involved in the multi-sited ethnography are elaborated on in Chapter 4, but as an overview, the analysis is based on 330 documents, the majority of which are either transcripts of one to one conversations, transcripts of meetings with regards to charging for support services, or extensive and detailed field notes. In addition, some of the documents encompass

photographs of artefacts, copies of emails, sketches of building plans, and copies of relevant documents such as organisational strategies, funding bids, and minutes of board meetings.

### 1.5 Pre-knowledge

My philosophical approach to the research is a pragmatist one, as detailed in Chapter 4. However, in addition to noting the philosophical approach that I have brought to the research, it is also worth noting the pre-knowledge that I held when commencing the research. My own background is working in the voluntary and community sector, and before commencing with the research I had worked within LIOs for four years.

My first role with a LIO was with a medium sized LIO in the East of England where I established a new funding advice service. I managed a team of funding advisors and also gave some funding advice myself. In addition, I was involved extensively with building up relationships with local government, who had funded the advice service directly. During my time with this LIO, I not only observed, but in many instances was part of, a culture of local government grant dependency, which came to an abrupt end when in 2010 the local authority ceased funding the service. I was made redundant as a result, and the funding advice service shrunk back considerably. In the lead up to, and following my departure, staff within the team and senior managers had begun to consider charging FLOs for advice to bridge the gap: this model has since been fully implemented by the LIO in question.

Following this post I moved into a role with a large, city-based LIO in the East Midlands, managing a partnership project involving each of the county's LIOs, via the Local Infrastructure Consortium. The project was aimed at improving the quality and consistency of funding advice available to FLOs across the county, and was funded by the Big Lottery Fund programme Building and Sustaining Infrastructure Services (widely referred to as BASIS) and then BASIS2, which looked set to come to an end during my time working on this project. As such, I conducted many conversations with my steering group,

senior managers within my organisation, and various stakeholders surrounding moves into charging in order to guarantee the future sustainability of the project. My plans were to set up a dual track project whereby the project conducted consultancy work for FLOs that wished to pay, for example writing of funding bids, in order to subsidise the continuing advice work with FLOs that could not afford to pay.

I was driven to undertake this research by a desire to explore this issue of charging for support services further, as I was aware that it was becoming an issue in both of the LIOs I had worked for and many of the other LIOs that I held relationships with. The major impact of coming to the research with this pre-knowledge has been my ability to integrate with the four LIOs quickly and effectively due to having a strong understanding of the issues involved and the language used with respect to them. This pre-knowledge allowed me to quickly build up relationships with actors who tended to trust and accept me as a fellow professional from within the LIO sector, rather than being seen as an outsider coming to critique or disrupt.

Without this pre-knowledge, I do not believe that an ethnographic approach would have been anywhere near as effective, as I was often faced with situations where actors would look to me for guidance, thought or opinion because they saw me as an 'insider'. However, the same pre-knowledge may also have come with another side to it, as arguably I came to the research with some preconceptions that charging was a good thing, which may have impacted on the language I used when I discussed charging during the fieldwork. I did however attempt to work in a way that did not bring my own preconceptions to bear, and I deliberately tried to avoid using any language which gave charging a value base, be that positive or negative.

## 1.6 Summary

This introduction has served to provide an overview of the research, with a particular focus on the research problem and its positioning. As part of this

focus on the research problem, the chapter presents my research question, which is:

***How do actors within LIOs consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy surrounding an institutional shift towards charging FLOs for support services?***

The chapter also serves to provide a number of key definitions used in the research going forward, and to provide an overview of my research methodology and the pre-knowledge which I brought to the research.

The research will use the backdrop of a shifting institutional environment, that is moving away from an 'old' narrative that endorses centralised funding and provision of infrastructure support, towards a 'new' narrative that favours demand-based funding and value of infrastructure services based on efficiency and effectiveness. It is against this backdrop of moves towards a new institutional environment that various risks to legitimacy are presented for LIOs and the actors operating within them.

The research focuses on the ways in which actors consider and respond to such ideas of legitimacy at the actor level. In turn, I will present later in the thesis a typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy and an eight stage process through which actors pursue and shape their legitimacy worldviews. Taken together, these two frameworks develop the current body of knowledge within the literature by shedding light on the contemporary changes currently happening within LIOs in terms of moves towards chargeable support services, particularly from an actor level perspective. This contribution to knowledge has arisen as a direct result of my ethnographic observations of how actors consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy against the backdrop of a shifting institutional environment towards the endorsement of chargeable support services.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Local infrastructure organisations and their organisational field**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the institutional environment surrounding local infrastructure organisations (LIOs) and their operation. In this chapter I do not intend to critically review the literature; this will follow in the literature review that I present in Chapter 3. Rather, here I intend to draw on the body of work relating to LIOs, some of which is also drawn from grey literature, to paint a picture of the institutional environment surrounding LIOs and the narratives present within it. Specifically, this will include reference to the historic development of the organisational population of LIOs; their functions; their financing, and the narratives surrounding their operation within their organisational field.

In this chapter I begin in section 2.2 by considering definitions of LIOs, and the institutional context surrounding the organisational field of LIOs. I do this by exploring the historical development of LIOs in order to give background to their development and evolution over time, before exploring the context of their organisational population post-2000. This section includes specific reference to the previous and current funding environments faced by the organisational population. I follow this in section 2.3 by exploring the narratives present in the organisational field, and the shifts from an 'old' narrative supporting centralised infrastructure delivery and consistent provision to a 'new' narrative which supports market-based funding and services based on proven value. Finally in section 2.4 I give consideration to the challenges now facing LIOs and how these may drive moves into charging for support services.

#### **2.2 LIOs and their organisational field**

I will use this section to explore the organisational field in which LIOs operate, both historically and in the present day. I start in section 2.2.1 with the functions

and definitions of LIOs, before using 2.2.2 to explore their early historical context and development. Following this, section 2.2.3 examines the pre-2010 institutional context of the organisational population, with 2.2.4 examining the and definitions of LIOs, before using 2.2.2 to explore their early historical funding of LIOs' work, because changes in the funding context appears to be symptomatic of a changing institutional narrative. For the same reason, attention is also given to changes in policy narratives.

### *2.2.1 Defining LIOs and their work*

LIOs are charities operating within the UK voluntary sector, providing support services to local level FLOs. Such organisations also tend to be membership organisations (Burrige, 1990a; Osborne and Tricker, 1994), whereby FLOs typically form the majority of members, and in many cases, are the only members. In the UK, LIOs are often known as 'infrastructure' organisations (Donahue, 2011; Rochester, 2012) or CVS'.

Despite a range of research attention afforded to LIOs (Osborne and Tricker, 1994; OPM / Compass Partnership, 2004b; Macmillan, 2006; Macmillan et al., 2007; Harker and Burkeman, 2007; Rochester, 2012; Munro and Mynott, 2014), a single definition is not easily visible. However, there are a number of commonalities in what often defines local infrastructure. Osborne and Tricker (1994) build on Burrige (1990a) to argue that LIOs are membership organisations, with membership criteria seeking to cover an area no larger than a county, and the LIO being accountable to its membership body of voluntary organisations through its AGM. They go on to point out that a LIO's membership is open to all voluntary organisations within its geographic catchment area.

Other ways of defining LIOs focus less on legal or structural parameters and more on functional parameters. For instance, The National Association of Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA henceforth), the representative body for LIOs in England, has mapped five performance standards (NAVCA, 2006) that cover the core functions of a LIO. These relate to development, support,

liaison, representation, and strategic partnership work. These terms combine to position LIOs as organisations that facilitate FLO engagement with the wider voluntary sector and partnership working between the voluntary sector and the public sector, as well as building the capacity of FLOs.

Other authors point to LIOs as providing coaching and capacity building roles to FLOs, with Wolfenden (1978) pointing out their *“important functions in providing support for voluntary organisations individually and collectively, and in reconciling the inherent tension between the autonomy of individual organisations and planning for the pursuit of common purposes”*. Harris and Schlappa (2007) argue that LIOs can be seen fulfilling roles as consultant, trainer and technical expert. Many LIOs also provide volunteering services through the provision of a Volunteer Centre (Howlett, 2008). My own definition for LIOs, which draws together aspects of Burrige (1990a), Osborne and Tricker (1994) and NAVCA (2006) is set out in Chapter 1.

Of the functions typically undertaken by LIOs, the support and development functions of a LIO will be the two most likely to relate closely to the research problem of LIO moves into chargeable support services. This is because these services offer the easiest option to develop chargeable products, as they offer more tangible outcomes that would directly affect a FLO. For example, fundraising advice would fall under the 'support' function, and has a much more tangible outcome (i.e. success in obtaining a grant) than a LIO lobbying a local council to provide a small grants programme would, for instance. In the latter example, a FLO would not be likely to pay upfront for a LIO to lobby the council for a programme that provides collective benefits to the wider sector and may not definitely offer a benefit to the FLO itself.

### *2.2.2 Historical development of LIOs*

Early LIOs took a slightly different form to their contemporary partners. The first LIOs are charted as having roots as Councils for Social Service (Brasnett, 1969; Rochester 2012). The earliest example of a Council for Social Service (CSS) is Hampstead Council for Social Welfare (Anonymous, undated; Rochester,

2012). This first CSS was followed by the subsequent set up of many other CSSs across the country between 1909 and the nineteen thirties and forties (Brasnett, 1969; Rochester, 2012), at which point it was recognised that central coordination of resources in the voluntary sector would prevent unnecessary duplication of work (Owen, 1965).

From this point onwards, LIOs were given little attention until the Wolfenden set out his report 'The Future of Voluntary Organisations' in 1978. The Wolfenden report was arguably the first time that the contribution of LIOs at a local level was recognised by government at a national level. Wolfenden's (1978) report examined the future of the voluntary sector with a particular view to up-skilling the sector such that it could engage with a public service delivery agenda. Wolfenden identified five main areas of advantage for LIOs, summarised by Osborne (2000) as:

- *“need identification and service development;*
- *support service provision to other voluntary organisations;*
- *liaison and linkage between voluntary and community groups;*
- *representation (of the views of the voluntary sector); and*
- *exceptionally, direct services to individuals.”*

As a result of these identified areas for development, the report formed the basis of increased governmental recognition of the potential for the voluntary and community sector to offer various elements of value added to public services. LIOs, however, despite the recommendations from Wolfenden as having a role to play in supporting the development of the sector, received little attention from the policy makers until around the turn of the century. The late 1990s saw the mainstreaming of the third sector into public policy (Kendall, 2000), and simultaneously, LIOs once again found themselves with increasing recognition from government and funders alike. This recognition ranged from government bodies who felt that LIOs' unique reach might complement partnership agendas (see for example Osborne's (1998) detailing of the role of LIOs in economic development partnerships), through to FLOs who may need additional support in moving towards the professionalism needed for public service delivery (HM Treasury, 2002).

### 2.2.3 Institutional context surrounding the organisational population of LIOs between 2000 and 2010

HM Treasury's (2002, p20) cross cutting review "The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery" placed a strong emphasis on the role of LIOs in supporting the 'professionalisation' of the voluntary sector, but found the need to further develop LIOs to do so, arguing that LIOs had:

*“developed piecemeal and, while some parts of the sector are well served, the overall coverage is variable in quality and fragile. There are significant gaps in networks and some duplication. There is further scope for collaborative working between existing organisations. Central government supports VCS infrastructure by providing technical support for specific projects and building capacity within small community groups. But current practice across Whitehall is inconsistent. The value of this investment would be enhanced if it were brought together into one cross government strategy for VCS capacity building and infrastructure support, with common purposes, resulting in more coherent and effective delivery”.*

This view should be treated with caution however, as findings from a government report represent only one element of the organisational field and do not necessarily represent the views of other institutions regarding LIOs at the time. However, the report did go on to set the basis for ChangeUp: a large-scale government investment programme in the improvement of voluntary sector infrastructure services. ChangeUp was delivered by the Home Office until 2006, and later through a body known as Capacitybuilders, which was set up by the government at the time with the primary aim of delivering this programme. Cooke (2004) argues that the ChangeUp programme set out to achieve:

- infrastructure support being available nationwide and structured for maximum efficiency;
- infrastructure support being sustainably funded;

- infrastructure support offering excellent provision; and reflecting and promoting diversity.

Simultaneously, the Office for Public Management and Compass had formed a partnership (2004b) which had been funded by the Home Office Active Community Unit to establish a strategy for infrastructure that resulted in 15 high level objectives which infrastructure should strive to achieve. These principles covered a range of areas including a focus on structure, efficiency and national level co-ordination. One high level objective of particular note stated that *“infrastructure should be sustainably funded from diverse sources of income”*. This is of interest as it is one of the earliest written indicators of a 'new' narrative breaking in the organisational field: a narrative that valued sustainable funding and ultimately set the tone in the organisational population for moves into chargeable support services. (See section 2.3 for a further discussion on the narratives surrounding LIOs within the organisational field.)

Government capacity building initiatives of the time were not without criticism, however. Harris and Schlappa (2007) outline a case study of an early capacity building programme, the Single Regeneration Budget - although this was aimed at a number of community development needs and not solely capacity building. In respect of their case study, they highlight that both LIO's inability to fulfil contract terms, and the perception from the outside the LIO that the LIO itself was “hoovering up all the money without wanting to pass it on”. Further, evaluations of ChangeUp (National Audit Office, 2009; TSRC, 2009) argue that the impacts of ChangeUp had included developments in areas such as better collaboration, efficiency savings, and improved standing with the statutory sector, but the TSRC evaluation (TSRC, 2009) specifically notes that impacts were slow to emerge, patchy in their achievement, and not always directly attributable to ChangeUp.

Simultaneous to increased government attention being directed towards LIOs, the capacity building agenda that drove LIO support also appeared to resonate in other areas of the organisational field. For instance, Harris and Schlappa (2007) report that in 2006, at the same time as The Big Lottery Fund commenced with a £155 million investment in capacity building via the Building

and Sustaining Infrastructure Services programme (BASIS), the Community Development Foundation were also running a 'Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund'. Further, Macmillan et al. (2007) found that *"as much as £300m will have been invested in VCS infrastructure from the current ChangeUp and BASIS programmes alone."* As such, the inflation of the organisational population throughout the early 2000s in terms of their relative importance within the broader organisational field can be clearly demonstrated.

It is possible, therefore, to consider the late 1990s and early 2000s as a time of rapid paced change for LIOs, and growth in terms of number, size and significance. Whilst limited attention in the literature is devoted to the impact of this growth on LIOs' operation and their place within the organisational field, some focus is given to the funding programmes directed towards LIOs. Northmore et al. (2003), for instance, attempt to evaluate the Community Fund's grant making to voluntary sector infrastructure organisations between 1996 and 2001. They find that *"there was no single set of indicators through which the impact of the project could be measured"*, and that *"measuring the added value that infrastructure can offer is not a straightforward exercise"*, once again signalling the 'patchy' provision of voluntary sector support services in the early part of the 2000s.

It is perhaps interesting to note then that at a time of rapid growth of LIOs, various scholars were struggling to measure the value added of these various funding programmes (TSRC, 2009; Harris and Schlappa, 2007; Northmore et al, 2003). Simultaneously however, support towards LIOs appeared to remain strong within the narratives of the broader organisational field, which played out particularly in the government policy making arena.

The arguable 'mainstreaming' of LIOs through an increasing policy focus and funding programmes to match, in turn led to additional roles for LIOs in supporting other government programmes. For instance, Dayson (2011) discusses the implications of the personalisation agenda for LIOs, and Osborne et al (2006) discuss the involvement of LIOs in Rural Regeneration Partnerships. It may be questioned whether some of these newfound roles for

LIOs present legitimacy risks, particularly with reference to mission drift (see Chapter 3 for further discussion of mission drift and legitimacy).

#### 2.2.4 Funding environment surrounding LIOs post 2010

Beyond this heavy investment in and endorsement of the work of LIOs in the early 2000s however, the current state of funding for LIOs has shifted rapidly, particularly between 2010 and 2015. This coincides with a change in political administration to a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government. In particular during this period, The Big Lottery Fund's BASIS2 - the second wave of the BASIS programme - came to an end in 2012, and simultaneously came a shift in support from government funding programmes.

Macmillan (2011) addresses the changing government policy towards LIOs in a policy paper discussing the implications of the government's 'Supporting a Stronger Civil Society' consultation (Office for Civil Society, 2011), which consulted upon how government might best support local infrastructure work. Macmillan suggests that the consultation "*makes two quite forceful claims: that civil society is neither strong nor independent, and thus government action is needed to help it make a 'transition'*" (Macmillan, 2011, p119).

Macmillan (2011) also discusses the idea of bursaries to pay for capacity building support which is floated in the consultation: the idea behind such bursaries is that funders would provide FLOs directly with funding to procure the capacity building services that they require, which they may in turn procure from LIOs or from an alternative provider. He suggests (p120) that policy moves in the direction of bursary provision may imply that "*there seems now to be a groundswell of opinion promoting bursaries for capacity-building and infrastructure support*". The idea of bursaries to fund infrastructure work had already been floated at this point by Harker and Burkeman (2007), but Macmillan argues that new agendas such as the personalisation agenda may have complemented the shift towards endorsement of bursary funding models. Such bursary models signal early moves into chargeable support services and therefore form part of the shifting narrative within the institutional environment against which the research is set.

The Supporting a Civil Society consultation led directly to the implementation of the 'Transforming Local Infrastructure' (TLI) fund (Big Lottery Fund, 2011) which provided a fund in excess of £30 million from the Office for Civil Society to 74 infrastructure partnerships across England. The fund was administered by the Big Lottery Fund and aimed to transform the ways in which LIOs worked with and supported FLOs. Munro and Mynott (2014, p4) argue that:

*"TLI allowed organisations to test new ways of working, to develop new products and services to increase their own sustainability, and to better support local charities and community groups. Some of these ways of working were very successful, others were more limited, and for others impact and returns on investment may be seen in years to come."*

Munro and Mynott's (2014) report for NAVCA is significant because it offers some of the first early evidence surrounding LIOs moving into chargeable support services, including how they are conducting such moves and the types of things they are charging for. I therefore give this report significant consideration here. In particular, their report explores the impact of TLI on LIOs. Of particular relevance here is their discussion of the LIO partnerships using TLI to develop "*sustainable funding*". In summarising the tone of this strand of work, they write (2014, p5):

*"Many organisations are introducing or increasing charging. The debate is about what sells and what will need subsidising. How can you make sure that groups with no money, and emerging groups, can still get support?"*

The majority of Munro and Mynott's report focuses on the use of TLI funding by LIOs. With reference to developing chargeable support service models, a number of cases are discussed. These include Tameside TLI Partnership's development of products to sell to other partnerships; Bolton TLI partnership producing a charged for training model; Nova Wakefield District Partnership mapping the needs of the market and producing tailored advice and consultancy products, and HAVCO in Haringey introducing charged for membership packages and pursuing "a 'more trade, less aid' ethic". What these projects appear to have in common is an 'incremental' approach to charging

which sees the LIOs taking small and gentle steps towards charging through exploring areas already familiar to them.

Where this differs is in the Sheffield case study reported by Munro and Mynott, where a voucher scheme was set up for FLOs seeking support. The voucher scheme operated through an online self-diagnostic test, a list of 98 approved services from accredited providers, and an online support fund application. The support fund was then being used to offer discounts between 50 and 90% of the cost of providing the support. This clearly sets a direction towards chargeable services as the service is clearly no longer free. This type of move sets a backdrop for the shifting institutional environment - even within the organisational population - against which the research is set. The case study states that a second phase of the project will continue with a focus on reducing administration requirements, and providing more targeted support.

This move in Sheffield to a voucher scheme echoes the activity of the Big Lottery Fund in their 'Building Capabilities for Impact and Legacy' (Big Lottery Fund, 2012) to move on from the centralised funding of infrastructure support under BASIS funding, by moving towards a market-based model of funding. Macmillan and Ellis Paine (2014, p2) write that the initiative explores:

*"How FLOs can best be encouraged and empowered to build their skills, knowledge and confidence (capabilities) as they seek to achieve outcomes for their beneficiaries more effectively and sustainably".*

Further, they add that (2014, p5):

*"The initiative coincides with a period in which VCS organisations are experiencing the unsettlement of an increasingly resource constrained and demanding landscape."*

Macmillan and Ellis Paine's (2014) paper exploring Building Capabilities sought to understand the ways in which FLOs and LIOs as providers could be supported to best provide outcomes to service beneficiaries; what shape the market for these services might take, and what lessons could be learned in respect of this new policy development. Amongst a wide range of findings, the paper found that:

- FLOs sought a provider they could trust more than a provider with a quality standard;
- Any ability to exercise choice and control is limited at present in the face of "awareness of support being poor";
- Most discussion around failures in the market surround "equity" in the market approach but there is limited evidence available to determine market capacity or potential market failures;
- Smaller FLOs were least likely to be able to access the market;
- Voice and representation work would be unlikely to be sustainable on the open market.

Along with the development of TLI and the Building Capabilities initiative that explores moves into markets, LIOs have been affected following the retrenchment of funding (Rochester, 2012). Munro and Mynott (2014, p16) argue that:

*"The economic downturn and public spending cuts have reduced funding for many charities. They have also created an increase in demand for services as individuals and communities experience growing hardship. Infrastructure has been hit by these twin pressures whilst local government, traditionally a significant source of income, is dealing with major budget cuts."*

The implication is the dual pressure on LIOs, both upwards in terms of increasing demand, but downwards in terms of facing their own funding pressures. This can also be seen in a survey conducted for NAVCA by Horner (2012), in which he reports that 68% of LIO respondents had already faced cuts from top tier authorities; that 40% had made or were making redundancies; and that 40% were using more volunteers in order to replace lost capacity. Again, this sets a backdrop against which a shifting institutional narrative begins to take shape. Further, specifically in relation to chargeable support services, 62% of LIOs were reported as exploring trading options.

It is clear then, that the post-2010 funding environment for LIOs is one with stark differences to the environment experienced pre-2010. This environment is characterised by moves towards chargeable services and a retrenchment of the

centralised funding seen by LIOs in the previous decade. This shift towards a 'new' narrative prevailing in the organisational field is discussed further in section 2.3.

### 2.3 Shifting narratives towards LIOs and their organisational population

In recent years, it has been possible to observe signals that indicate a shifting institutional environment for both the voluntary sector as an organisational field and LIOs' organisational population within it. This may have been triggered by the 2008 recession, during which, Wilding (2010, p97) argues that:

*“the prevailing narrative quickly changed from sustainability to survival, albeit phrased as ‘resilience’”.*

The increased demand for services has been explored to some extent in section 2.2.4, although against a backdrop of LIOs needing to become more resilient as per Wilding's assertions above, this increased demand for services has posed problems for LIOs. Harker and Burkeman (2007, p1) state that LIOs:

*“have been operating in a very difficult environment with pressures on them from all sides, while attempting to manage high expectations and heavy demands”.*

Simultaneously, narratives in the funding arena - which to some extent may have been shaped by changes in the political and policy arena - appeared to signal moves towards becoming more business-like, with some arguably negative connotations associated with grant funding. This is described by Macmillan (2007, p32) in the following manner:

*“The emergence of a more challenging funding environment has coincided with the development of new ways of framing discussions around finance and funding in the sector. A new double-sided language appears to have taken hold, with notions of ‘investment’ and ‘returns’ on the one hand counter-posed against ‘traditional’ grants and, in some formulations, ‘grant dependency’ on the other”.*

The recession may only have been in part responsible for the changing funding narratives surrounding LIO funding, however: the 2010 general election saw a coalition government come to power and along with that, a changing set of policies and the introduction of 'The Big Society' as a government initiative. Alcock (2010b, p384), in a policy paper aimed at identifying the various specific policy commitments under the Big Society model, describes evidence that the implications of the Big Society model included that *"levels of government support may be reduced, rather than enhanced"*, and goes on to discuss the closure of the FutureBuilders and Capacitybuilders bodies before signalling that LIOs may too face their own government cuts.

Indeed LIOs have since faced their own cuts (as documented in section 2.3.4). There is a clear contrast between the narratives perpetuating themselves within LIOs' organisation field pre-2010 and post-2010. The 'old' narrative, which was much more prominent pre-2010 provided widespread support of - and funding for - the provision of voluntary sector support services through LIOs as a vehicle for these services. A range of studies detail this centralised funding and support (HM Treasury (2002); Macmillan (2006); Macmillan et al. (2007); Harker and Burkeman (2007)). Along with this centralised funding came an assumed value of infrastructure support.

However, the 'old' narrative is not only dictated by funding: Lewis (2005) discusses a 'partnership' approach to the sector for example. This is echoed by Crowe, Dayson and Wells (2010) who, when framing the differences in attitude to the sector between the previous Government and the new government argue that the relationship between the state and society will fundamentally shift; as will the resources provided to the sector.

The post-2010 environment is now characterised by moves for LIOs to become more business-like, with discussion surrounding sustainable ways of selling services on the market (Macmillan and Ellis Paine, 2014); provision of support services via vouchers which are then used to discount the cost of services (Munro and Mynott, 2014), and the introduction of initiatives such as Building Capabilities for Impact and Legacy (Big Lottery Fund, 2012) and Transforming Local Infrastructure (Big Lottery Fund, 2011), where the emphasis on

transformation is key. With respect to Building Capabilities, Macmillan (2013) argues that this demand-led model typifies two underlying narratives: a rationing narrative that ensures infrastructure services are efficient, short interventions; and an empowerment narrative that allows FLOs choice in how they receive support. The principles of both narratives appear to be very much a part of the 'new' narrative facing the organisational field.

In discussing the transformation of the voluntary sector at large, Ellis Paine, Alcock and Taylor (2012, p1) describe some of the main transformations also facing LIOs in their organisation field. They describe a:

*"Backdrop of an evolving third sector. The last decade has been characterised by growth – of the number of organisations within the sector, of its income, its staff and its infrastructure. Statutory funding has become increasingly important, with grants from government increasingly replaced by contracts. New public management principles have been adopted by an increasing number of third sector organisations, to the extent that there has been a blurring of boundaries between third, public and private sectors. The policy environment has also evolved. New Labour's period of office was characterised by high levels of engagement and support towards the third sector. After being elected [sic] in 2010, the Coalition government largely abandoned the programme of support for third sector infrastructure, along with implementing widespread cuts to public expenditure".*

Transformation however, is not necessarily a quick or easy process. For instance, Stafford (2012, p257) produced a case study of an infrastructure consortium faced with incentives to consider sharing back office services, which chose not to. She argues that the importance of relationships in this decision may be the key factor in *"assisting – or inhibiting – productive collaboration"*.

Further, transformation towards this 'new' narrative may present its own challenges. Drawing on lessons from other countries, it may be worth noting that in an American article, Froelich (1999, p246) considers responses to resource dependency in terms of diversifying revenue strategies: she finds that the effects of attempting to diversify from traditional resource dependent

streams result in “critical but unanswered questions about nonprofit performance, legitimacy, and public policy issues”. Issues particularly addressing the legitimacy aspect of this argument will be picked up in Chapter 3.

Alongside moves towards demand-led funding models, LIOs are facing related changes in their organisational field, such as Macmillan’s (2013) suggestion of the decoupling of the state and the voluntary and community sector. Amidst the new narratives facing LIOs, Rochester (2012, p108) argues that the future for LIOs remains unclear, and that funding cuts to LIOs “*may represent the most serious threat yet to their survival*”. He goes on to argue (2012, p109) that survival may “*involve recovering some of the original values underlying the work of [LIOs] and replacing the culture of the market with traditional voluntary sector behaviours.*”

#### 2.4 Challenges facing LIOs and their provision of support services

It is clear from the literature that LIOs are facing a new narrative surrounding their organisational population. This new narrative is one of demand based funding, and value needing to be proven based on demand for services rather than being assumed. There appear to be moves away from LIOs working in partnership with government (for example Crowe, Dayson and Wells, 2010) and towards becoming much more independent.

Overall, it is clear to see that LIOs have found themselves in a changing institutional environment which has seen support for their role in the voluntary sector both build rapidly and then be rapidly stripped back. The pace and scale of this change may drive LIOs to now consider charging for support services in order to sustain their income.

The Munro and Mynott (2014) report discussed in section 2.3.4 sheds some light on the ways in which LIOs are seeking to deal with these changes: most appear to be moving gradually towards charging for services which appear to be natural progressions or extensions for them, such as training packages or

providing services to other infrastructure partnerships. However, there was discussion of more radical change and moves towards a voucher based model of chargeable support as discussed in the Sheffield case study (p18), which is being reflected in practice elsewhere in areas such as Worcestershire.

There are various legitimacy risks presented to LIOs moving towards charging FLOs for support. These include the need to meet the public benefit requirement in charity law (Morgan, 2012); the potential exclusion of small FLOs that cannot afford to pay (Freeman, 2010); the potential for mission drift (Bennett and Savani, 2011); meeting stakeholder expectations (Zimmerman and Dart, 1998); the potential 'crowding out' of future funding; problems justifying charges to FLOs that previously received services for free (Freeman, 2010); and tensions between providing a generalised benefit to as many FLOs as possible under a charitable model, and controlling access to the benefit in order to sell maximum services under a trading model. These ideas surrounding legitimacy potentially pose problems for LIOs falling in line with the 'new' narrative and moving towards charging. Such risks to LIOs' legitimacy will be explored further in Chapter 3.

## 2.5 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the institutional context within the organisational field of LIOs, by charting the development of LIOs over time and paying particular attention to the institutional context surrounding the field both pre- and post-2010. In particular, the literature finds that an 'old' narrative favoured centralised funding of local infrastructure and an assumed value of support services. Against a backdrop of funding cuts both to the sector and to LIOs, a 'new' narrative endorses market-based support services and value proven based on demand. Both the 'Transforming Local Infrastructure' and 'Building Capabilities' initiatives have been symptomatic of this new narrative. However, transformation is not necessarily quick or easy and further, and in Chapter 3 I will explore how such a transformation may lead LIOs to take steps which may result in actors operating within them to question their own sense of legitimacy, and the risks that may be posed to it.

This chapter explored the context surrounding the institutional environment facing LIOs within their organisational field. The next chapter will address the literature with respect to the institutional perspective relating to this context, and specifically will focus on ideas of legitimacy surrounding the transformation of LIOs from the 'old' narrative to the 'new' one.

## Chapter 3

### LIOs, chargeable support services and legitimacy at the actor level: a review of the literature from an institutional perspective

#### 3.1 Introduction to the chapter

In this chapter I seek to review the literature as it relates to the research problem, with a particular focus on the literature relating to legitimacy, its definitions and types. I also look to build a picture in relation to the research problem of a number of possible risks to legitimacy. Given the nature of legitimacy as a sub-field within the body of work relating to institutional theory, I progress these arguments throughout both this chapter and the thesis using an institutional lens.

I then build on the arguments from the literature in relation to legitimacy in order to anchor ideas of legitimacy in three core aspects of the research problem. Firstly I explore ideas of legitimacy in relation to a shifting institutional backdrop. Secondly, I build on these arguments to explore the links already established in the literature between actors, legitimacy and such a shifting backdrop. Finally I take these arguments into a practical context and explore ideas of legitimacy as applied to the context of LIOs charging for support services.

To provide a broad context to the institutional lens underpinning the study and in particular driving ideas of legitimacy, early definitions argue that institutions are "*establishment[s] of relative permanence of a distinctly social sort*" (Hughes, 1936, p180) which "*exist in the integrated and standardized behaviour of individuals*" (Hughes, 1939, p319), or as a structure of "*norms that regulate the relations of individuals to each other*" and "*define what the relations of individuals ought to be*" (Parsons, 1934/1990, p327). Unlike early institutionalism, new institutionalism (Scott, 1995; 2008) is not based in the replication of institutions using processes of standardisation of individuals as is seen in the definitions above, but instead on ideas of processes which encourage particular cultural rules (Meyer and Rowan, 1977) and cognitive beliefs (Zucker, 1987), and by the normative, coercive and mimetic mechanisms

(DiMaggio and Powell, 1983) through which institutions dissipate themselves amongst the actors within them and in turn perpetuate themselves amongst those actors. Primarily, this research is grounded in new institutionalism as opposed to old institutionalism.

My overarching critique of institutionalism per se, which is particularly demonstrated in relation to the early definitions given above, and picked up throughout the chapter, is its reliance on actors as passive carriers and replicators of institutions who lack agency and the ability to shape institutions in their own right. If this were indeed to be the case, the evolution of institutions would likely be difficult, as there would be no driver for change in the absence of actors - who in aggregate, form institutions - pursuing it. For the purposes of this research, although an institutional lens is adopted, I assert that actors have some agency from their institutional environment and hence possess the capabilities to consider and respond to the environment they are a part of - in the case of this research, through ideas of legitimacy.

This research is underpinned by a similar notion to the critique above: that actors possess some agency from the institutional environments in which they exist, and that they are able to seek to shape institutions. Throughout this chapter - and the thesis - therefore, I argue that due attention should be given in the literature to the notion of actors not only as perceivers or carriers of legitimacy, but also as 'shapers' of institutions through the ways in which they consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy.

This chapter consists of two broad sections: in section 3.2, I explore ideas of legitimacy as established in the body of theory, including covering a number of typologies of legitimacy that are established in the literature. In section 3.3, I seek to establish the literature relating to additional key elements of the research problem, with a particular focus on interactions between legitimacy, a shifting institutional environment, and the actors within that environment. I also apply ideas of legitimacy to the LIOs charging for support services. I then move on to provide a summary of the chapter in section 3.4 in drawing together the key arguments arising from the body of literature as related to this piece of research.

## 3.2 Legitimacy in the literature

My own definition of legitimacy is set out in Chapter 1, but is repeated below for ease of reference. I draw on Maurer's definition (1971, p361), who defined legitimacy as:

*“The process whereby an organization justifies to a peer or superordinate system its right to exist”.*

I then build on this to define legitimacy as:

*The process whereby an organisation, or a group of actors or individual actor within an organisation, justifies to themselves, a peer, or a superordinate system their right for the organisation to exist, act, or follow a particular direction.*

In this section, I seek to explore ideas of legitimacy currently established in the literature. I begin in section 3.2.1 by exploring the development of ideas of legitimacy over time: I argue that typically, approaches to legitimacy have been set at the organisational or institutional level with limited consideration of the role of actors in legitimacy formation. In section 3.2.2 I examine the types of legitimacy already established in the literature, through a range of typologies of legitimacy that have been established by a number of separate scholars. Again, I argue here that in terms of the typologies of legitimacy available, there is very limited on legitimacy as constructed and perceived at the actor level. In section 3.2.3 I establish a set of arguments surrounding risks to legitimacy in respect of the research problem of LIOs charging for support services, before summarising the section briefly in section 3.2.5.

### *3.2.1 The development of legitimacy*

The notion of legitimacy has received much attention in the institutional literature (Weber, 1924/1968; Parsons, 1960; Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Dornbusch and Scott, 1975; Meyer and Scott 1983a). Perhaps the first mention of legitimacy as a concept in the literature arises from Weber (1924/1968) who

argued (p215) that "*there are three pure types of legitimate domination*". These are said to be as follows:

1. That which is based on 'rational grounds' and is "*resting on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands*";
2. That which is based on 'traditional grounds' and is "*resting on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them*";
3. That which is based on 'charismatic grounds' and is "*resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him*".

Weber's stance is that legitimacy can be seen as a direct result of conformity with social rules or maxims, and that these three types of legitimacy provide the framework for said maxims in relation to legitimacy. Whilst these rules provide a sound starting point for the basis of legitimacy, other types of legitimacy are highly likely to exist in addition to these: for example, this early model takes no account of normative pressures from outside a particular organisation or institution. This thesis relates to the role of actors in considering, constructing and responding to ideas of legitimacy, and in that respect Weber's model appears to be overly simplistic and fails to address any role that actors may have in determining legitimacy beyond the role of a charismatic leader figure.

Parsons (1960) later developed Weber's ideas, viewing them as a "*congruence of an organisation with social laws, norms and values*" (Deephouse and Suchman, 2008, p50). Parsons did not explicitly use the term 'legitimacy' but he argued for many of the concepts that have come to be associated with legitimacy. For example, he argued that 'institutionalisation' of a system occurs when actors orient themselves towards normative standards arising from within a system (Parsons, 1951). In turn, such conformity with normative standards is frequently reflected in current understandings of legitimacy. Application of Parsons' ideas to the research problem may indicate that as LIOs increasingly face shifts in their institutional environment, actors may feel compelled to

comply with such shifts in order to maintain such congruence with social laws, norms and values, ultimately in seeking to maintain legitimacy. However, as with Weber, Parsons' ideas do not account for any complexity at the actor level - he appears to assume that all actors would choose to seek congruence with the normative pressures being bestowed upon them and, further, to treat actors as a homogenous body. Arguably this does not then account for what in the research problem at hand can be characterised as a polarised and conflicted response to ideas surrounding chargeable support services.

Parsons' ideas went on to be reinforced and developed by a number of other scholars including Dowling and Pfeffer (1975), Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) and Czarniawska-Joerges (1989). While ideas relating to normative pressures arising from such scholars serve to answer questions about the ways in which actors seek to conform with that which is perceived to be legitimate, these scholars again do not shed any light on how legitimacy may be constructed at the actor level, instead treating legitimacy as a concept formed and viewed at the institutional level.

Beyond this, Meyer and Rowan (1977) developed ideas relating to legitimacy as one of their key aspects of analysis in their seminal paper on 'rational myths'. Their view of legitimacy is less rigid than that proposed by early scholars such as Weber and Parsons, as it accounts for the diffusion of myths through informal constructs as well as formal constructs. However, similarly to Weber, they still have a strong focus on regulative legitimacy. They argue that:

*"The myths generated by particular organizational practices and diffused through relational networks have legitimacy based on the supposition that they are rationally effective. But many myths also have official legitimacy based on legal mandates. Societies that, through nation building and state formation, have developed rational-legal orders are especially prone to give collective (legal) authority to institutions which legitimate particular organizational structures."*

Meyer and Rowan (1977) place legitimacy on a similar footing to resources in terms of its criticality as a concept for organisational survival, and they argue that legitimacy can be gained through conformity with rational myths that prevail

throughout the institution. Although lacking in a formal definition for legitimacy, they discuss ideas of 'rational effectiveness', 'legal mandates' and 'collectively valued purposes, means, and goals'. The latter notion allows much more for elaboration into the role of actors in the process of legitimacy formation, as it places an emphasis on the collective. In doing so, such a focus acknowledges actors' role in forming a part of a collective. However, in spite of this, like many other conceptions of legitimacy, in its overall approach Meyer and Rowan's conceptions sit predominantly at the organisational level, leaving only limited room for acknowledgement of actors as anything beyond instrumental carriers of institutional purposes. Unlike previous scholars, Meyer and Rowan do acknowledge that actors have a role to play, but they do not seek to establish at an actor level what that role is.

Meyer and Scott (1983) progress the notion of legitimacy into ideas surrounding culture, and they propose that to be legitimate is to provide perfect explanations and to lack any alternatives. They argue that (p201):

*"We take the view that organizational legitimacy refers to the degree of cultural support for an organization - the extent to which the array of established cultural accounts provide explanations for its existence, functioning and jurisdiction, and lack or deny alternatives... In such an instance, legitimacy mainly refers to the adequacy of an organization as theory. A completely legitimate organisation would be one about which no question could be raised. Perfect legitimating is perfect theory, (i.e. without uncertainty) and confronted by no alternatives."*

This idea of lacking alternatives should be subject of some critique here: it seems highly likely that a course of action, a decision, or even the existence of an organisation can still be legitimate in the presence of alternatives. This is perhaps best exemplified in the voluntary sector: whilst the sheer number of charities operating within it must mean that there is some duplication in places - i.e. there exists an alternative - those organisations are not likely to be considered as 'illegitimate'. Whilst the absence of questioning may indicate the presence of legitimacy, there must be more to 'being legitimate' than this; i.e. other states of legitimacy must exist. The idea of cultural support may offer an additional dimension to legitimacy here: as with Meyer and Rowan's focus on

the collective, consideration of cultural support again provides implicit acknowledgement of a collective. Again, actors may be argued to have a role in the formation of a collective level at which culture occurs, but Meyer and Scott's work does not provide an explicit consideration of the role of the actor *per se*.

It can clearly be seen that many of the key scholars seeking to advance ideas of legitimacy set out to examine legitimacy at the organisational level, rather than the actor level. Some semblance of legitimacy at the actor level does, however, occur through the literature in number of typologies of legitimacy - albeit to a limited extent. The next section will therefore set out a number of key typologies of legitimacy arising from the literature.

### 3.2.2 Types of legitimacy

Beyond exploring the development of legitimacy in the literature, it is also worth examining the forms that legitimacy may take and the ways in which it might manifest itself. Over the last two decades, various scholars have developed typologies of legitimacy to argue for varying forms that legitimacy might take - many of which overlap or complement each other. A compilation of the various types of legitimacy identified in the literature are set out below in Table 3A, and discussed following this. The intention of this table is demonstrate not only the types of legitimacy presented in the literature through a number of typologies, but also the crossover between those legitimacy types.

**Table 3A: Conceptions of legitimacy in the literature**

| <u>Type of legitimacy</u>                  | <u>Author(s)</u>   |
|--|--|
| Cognitive or cultural-cognitive legitimacy | Aldrich and Fiol (1994), Scott (1995), Suchman (1995) Foreman and Whetten (2002), Zyglidopoulos (2003); Johnson and Holub (2003) and Golant and Sillince (2007). |
| Sociopolitical legitimacy                  | Aldrich and Fiol (1994)  |
| Pragmatic legitimacy                       | Suchman (1995); Barron (1998); Foreman and Whetten (2002); Johnson and Holub (2003)  |
| Moral legitimacy                           | Suchman (1995); Barron (1998); Johnson and Holub (2003)  |
| Exchange legitimacy                        | Suchman (1995)   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Influence legitimacy   | Suchman (1995)                                     |
| Dispositional legitimacy   | Suchman (1995)                                     |
| Consequential legitimacy   | Suchman (1995)                                     |
| Procedural legitimacy  | Suchman (1995)                                     |
| Structural legitimacy  | Suchman (1995)                                     |
| Personal legitimacy / charismatic legitimacy   | Suchman (1995); Weber (1924/1968)                  |
| Comprehensibility legitimacy   | Suchman (1995)                                     |
| Taken for granted legitimacy   | Suchman (1995)                                     |
| Regulatory legitimacy  | Scott (1995), Deephouse (1996)                     |
| Normative legitimacy   | Scott (1995)                                       |
| Rational legitimacy  | Weber (1924/1968)                                  |
| Traditional legitimacy   | Weber (1924/1968)                                  |
| Media legitimacy   | Deephouse (1996)                                   |
| Managerial legitimacy  | Ruef and Scott (1998)                              |
| Technical legitimacy   | Ruef and Scott (1998); Taylor and Warburton (2003) |
| Internal legitimacy  | Kostova and Roth (2002)                            |
| External legitimacy  | Kostova and Roth (2002)                            |
| Moral legitimacy (note different explanation to the moral legitimacy outlined above) | Taylor and Warburton (2003)                        |
| Political legitimacy   | Taylor and Warburton (2003)                        |

This table presents 25 different types of legitimacy arising within the literature. Clearly the most commonly agreed upon types of legitimacy include cognitive (or cultural-cognitive) legitimacy and pragmatic legitimacy, with some consensus also being provided for ideas of moral legitimacy, personal legitimacy, regulatory legitimacy, and technical legitimacy. I will deal with each of these legitimacy types in turn.

Cognitive legitimacy - also referred to as cultural-cognitive legitimacy - is linked to ideas of institutional culture and the values that are taken for granted within it. This idea of cognitive legitimacy is also echoed by many other scholars including Scott (1995), Suchman (1995), Foreman and Whetten (2002), Zyglidopoulos (2003) and Golant and Sillince (2007), and the same ideas are echoed by Weber in his conception of 'traditional legitimacy' and Aldrich and Fiol (1994) in their conception of 'sociopolitical legitimacy'. Such ideas assert that something is deemed legitimate if it is taken for granted as part of a received culture. As with some of my earlier critique in this chapter, this type of legitimacy sees actors as carriers of institutions, who merely receive institutional values and then deem ideas in line with those values to be legitimate. Such legitimacy may indeed exist in some types of actors, but it is likely that other

types of actors are more critical in their questioning and do not deem ideas to be legitimate simply use they fall into line with received cultural wisdom either at an implicit or an explicit level.

Pragmatic legitimacy is perhaps most clearly detailed in Suchman's (1995) seminal paper on legitimacy. He describes pragmatic legitimacy (p571) as being "based on audience self interest", and he breaks down pragmatic legitimacy into three legitimacy sub-types. Of these, he proposes (p578):

- 'exchange legitimacy' which is based on "*support for an organizational policy based on that policy's expected value to a particular set of constituents*";
- 'influence legitimacy' which proposes support for an organisation based on the belief that it is responsive to an actor or group of actors' larger interests;
- 'dispositional legitimacy' based on the personification of organisations and in turn support for organisations which "*share our values*" or are "*trustworthy*" or "*honest*" (p578).

Ideas in relation to pragmatic legitimacy also arise in Barron (1998); Foreman and Whetten (2002); Johnson and Holub (2003). In each of these papers, ideas of pragmatic legitimacy again relate to the viewing of legitimacy in terms of self interest.

Moral legitimacy is addressed in the literature by Suchman (1995), Barron (1998) and Johnson and Holub (2003). As with pragmatic and cognitive legitimacy types, all three papers follow similar conceptions of moral legitimacy, appearing to link moral legitimacy with the "*moral approval of society at large*" (Barron, 1998). Johnson and Holub also base moral legitimacy on conformity with the moral expectations of society. Suchman, as with pragmatic legitimacy, breaks moral legitimacy into a number of sub-types, arguing for the existence of 'consequential legitimacy', based on the evaluation of outcomes; 'procedural legitimacy', based on how appropriate and robust a set of procedures might be; 'structural legitimacy' based on an organisation's "*socially constructed capacity to perform specific types of work*" (p581). Whilst employing a different term,

Scott (1995) also argues for the existence of 'normative' legitimacy, based on conformity with normative pressures arising within the institutional environment.

Taylor and Warburton (2003) in their paper examining legitimacy in the voluntary sector also propose a conception of 'moral' legitimacy, but one with a different focus to those listed above. For Taylor and Warburton (p329), moral legitimacy is legitimacy based on the "*values of social justice and equality*": that is to say that an idea or concept has legitimacy if it can be justified based on moral and ethical principles.

There is also some consensus in the literature in terms of what Weber (1925/1968) terms 'charismatic legitimacy', which is later termed 'personal legitimacy' by Suchman (1995). Under this conception of legitimacy, something may be deemed to be legitimate based on a particular charismatic leader making the case for it. Weber discusses the idea of 'devotion' to a charismatic leader and such legitimacy in turn follows said devotion: if an actor or group of actors put their faith into a particular leader, the argument here is that they may then follow unquestioningly based on their trust of that person's judgement. Again, like with cultural-cognitive legitimacy, this may not account for any level of criticality or questioning arising from actors, but at the same time this may hold true for some types of actors.

Both Ruef and Scott (1998) and Taylor and Warburton (2003) propose arguments for 'technical legitimacy'. Such technical legitimacy is seen to be based on technical ability or technical skills. This conception of legitimacy appears to be based much more in practice in terms of ideas surrounding ability to deliver than some of the other conceptions of legitimacy that have been stated above, and this opens up questions around how other types of legitimacy may arise from practice - for example, legitimacy that may be related to having a plan in place to follow, or legitimacy related to the likelihood of securing success or results. Other technical types of legitimacy may for instance be linked to innovation or to advancing practice. As such, a related legitimacy type based in practice, also proposed by Ruef and Scott (1998) is 'managerial legitimacy', which argues for legitimacy based on efficiency.

There is also some consensus on ideas of 'regulatory legitimacy' arising from both Scott (1995) and Deephouse (1996). Scott's conception of regulatory legitimacy arises from his influential 'three pillars of institutions', which are overarching in their approach compared to the level of specificity in some of the other legitimacy types floated, such as those proposed by Suchman. Here, legitimacy is based on conformance with legal and regulatory systems, rules and processes, as is the case in Deephouse's concept of regulatory legitimacy.

Deephouse further proposes a type of legitimacy that does not appear to occur elsewhere in the literature: that of 'media legitimacy'. Such a concept is based on the idea of legitimacy in the eyes of the general public. Although this is similar to normative legitimacy in its focus, it departs from normative legitimacy in terms of the specificity of its focus, as normative legitimacy is based on perceived pressures from within the institutional environment - of which the public may or may not be a part. Here however, the assertion is that legitimacy is only gained when the general public are directly seen to approve or have buy in.

Kostova and Roth (2002) propose two ideas of legitimacy neither of which are reflected in other aspects of the literature. They discuss ideas of internal versus external legitimacy. They argue that internal legitimacy is based on legitimacy as perceived by the 'insiders' within an organisation, and that external legitimacy is that relating to those with an interest that sit outside the organisation. This definition is significant for this study because it has one of the strongest conceptions of the role of actors with an interest in the institution in defining legitimacy, particularly through the acknowledgement of 'insiders'. Here, the suggestion may follow that if actors do not perceive the organisation or institution as legitimate, there may be a crisis of legitimacy given the noted agency of the actors under this typology.

Three final definitions of legitimacy addressed here also lack consensus in the literature. The first two arise from Suchman's (1995) seminal paper: these two complementary types of legitimacy are 'taken for granted' legitimacy and 'comprehensibility' legitimacy. Firstly, in reference to 'comprehensibility', this legitimacy proposal links to the ease of which institutional 'participants' are able

to *"arrange their experiences into coherent, understandable accounts"*. Linked to this idea of comprehensibility is the notion of 'taken for granted' legitimacy, where institutional change is so deeply integrated with the actors within it that dissent is submerged due to the acceptance of organisational 'givens'.

In direct contrast to the idea of taken for granted legitimacy, Taylor and Warburton (2003) discuss a conception of 'political' legitimacy, which relates to the level of democratic buy in to a decision. They highlight the risk that the more democratically accountable a decision becomes, the weaker the leadership on such a decision. This poses interesting insight when applied to the idea of LIOs charging for support services, as LIOs are membership organisations and many will therefore wish to consult their members over any significant changes, yet such a consultation may risk diluting or even negating the idea of charging - although it is also possible that members may support the idea as active participants within the organisation.

In the section above, 25 individual conceptions of legitimacy have been highlighted. Of these conceptions of legitimacy, clearly the highest levels of consensus are in respect of cognitive or cultural-cognitive legitimacy (based on cultural taken-for-grantedness of norms and values); pragmatic legitimacy (based on self interest) and moral legitimacy (based on normative approval). Beyond these three conceptions of legitimacy, some crossover still occurs on the following conceptions of legitimacy: personal legitimacy; regulatory legitimacy, and technical legitimacy.

There appear to be only few conceptions of legitimacy that arise as a result of practice and the evaluation of practice, and more conceptions of legitimacy that sit at a higher level in terms of compliance with rules, norms and systems of various respects. There also appear to be only a few conceptions of legitimacy which appear to reflect agency of actors and the ability for actors to evaluate legitimacy critically on their own basis.

In the next section, I move beyond the types of legitimacy and examine the risks to legitimacy, specifically as applied to the research problem.

### 3.2.3 Risks to legitimacy

In this section, I document a number of the risks to legitimacy that charging for support services potentially presents. These include risks to relationships, reputation, responsiveness and resources; the need to meet the public benefit requirement in charity law, risks relating to mission drift; risks relating to the readiness and the technical capabilities of the LIO and to the marketing of their services, and risks relating to governance.

To begin a broad overview of some of the risks that LIOs may face when moving into provision of chargeable support services, I turn to a Canadian paper by Zimmerman and Dart (1998), whose research looked at charitable organisations undertaking commercial activity, and the intended and unintended outcomes of such activity. Here, four themes are presented as the consequences of such a move into provision of chargeable products and services: these relate to impacts on relationships, resources, reputation and responsiveness.

In respect of resources, the key outcomes of moves into chargeable support services included shifts away from intentional giving; increased financial risk; *"using more energy to get fewer dollars"* (p28) by having to invest a lot and take risks upfront; *"burning charitable dollars"* (p28) in a bid to produce goods; risks associated with being seen as less legitimate by volunteers who are not in agreement with charging and hence the risk of losing those volunteers; costs of hiring business managers; and commercial activities being undermined by the mission and values of the charity.

In respect of relationships, risks were found to the relationships across the board: from the board of directors to volunteers, and from staff to beneficiaries. These risks to relationships were predominantly contingent upon the idea that the level of buy-in might shift under a chargeable services model.

Relating to ideas of reputation, risks were observed to the community perception of the charity; the market perception of the charity, and also the

difficulties in defining the organisation as 'successful' in the face of a shifting definition of success.

Finally challenges to the 'responsiveness' of the charity were raised, with consideration given to changes to structures within the organisation; the levels of productivity; the level of focus on 'customers' and the idea that the mission of the charity may be undermined by partaking in business-like activity.

Although these challenges are not directly wrapped up in ideas of legitimacy, the risks presented all affect the way in which the charity is viewed, both at the internal organisational level, and at the levels of the organisational population and the organisational field. On this basis, they provide a useful snapshot of the type of challenges to legitimacy that a LIO moving into chargeable support services might face. However, these ideas are presented at the organisational level, in terms of the problems that these challenges might pose to organisations. Here, it would be interesting to discover how it is that the people involved with these organisational challenges at an actor level - whether it be actors enacting them, or beneficiaries interacting with them - perceive organisational changes and challenges associated with charging. Further it would be worth questioning on what basis they make decisions as to how to proceed with respect to that organisation.

There are also regulative risks posed to LIOs moving into provision of chargeable support services. These include the need to meet the public benefit requirement in charity law (Synge, 2015; Morgan, 2012), and the potential for mission drift (Cornforth, 2014; Bennett and Savani, 2011).

Regarding the public benefit requirement in charity law, the Charities Act (2011) sets out in section 1(a) on the definition of charities and further in section 17 on public benefit, that there is a public benefit requirement to be met for an organisation to be considered charitable. Guidance issued by the Charity Commission (2014) stipulates that of this requirements, there are two aspects; the benefit aspect and the public aspect. In order to satisfy the benefit aspect, an organisation must meet the following guidance:

*"A purpose must be beneficial - this must be in a way that is identifiable and capable of being proved by evidence where necessary and which is not based on personal views.*

*Any detriment or harm that results from the purpose (to people, property or the environment) must not outweigh the benefit - this is also based on evidence and not on personal views."*

Further, to meet the public aspect, the charitable purpose must:

*"Benefit the public in general, or a sufficient section of the public - what is a 'sufficient section of the public' varies from purpose to purpose."*

It must also:

*"Not give rise to more than incidental personal benefit - personal benefit is 'incidental' where (having regard both to its nature and to its amount) it is a necessary result or by-product of carrying out the purpose."*

In particular here, it is the idea that a charity must have a purpose and that it must benefit the public in general or a sufficient section of the public that poses a potential risk to legitimacy for LIOs moving into chargeable support services. Fee charging for services considered to be core to the charitable purpose therefore poses a risk to the charity particularly in terms of its legal legitimacy. If LIOs are to charge for a core part of their work, then the question arises as to whether they are potentially excluding the very section of the public that they set out to benefit, from benefitting if those charges are not deemed affordable by the beneficiaries.

Further to regulatory risks surrounding the public benefit requirement, there are also risks as they relate to the notion of mission drift. Cornforth (2014, p15) argues that:

*"History suggests it can be difficult for "alternative" forms of commercial enterprise, such as co-operatives, to achieve both their social mission and commercial success. There is the ever-present danger that they succumb to mission drift as commercial priorities take precedence or*

*business failure if social mission is given precedence. Similarly, social enterprises may experience tensions and instability as they try to combine different institutional logics."*

Although the reference here is to 'alternative' forms of social enterprise, and whilst the paper gives consideration to organisations delivering government services, the same principle may still apply to LIOs moving into chargeable support services. Cornforth examines some of the ways in which mission drift can be combated and proposes that these can include governance mechanisms such as building safeguards into constitutions or using external accreditation; *"compartmentalising commercial and social mission activities"* through separation of the charitable and the profit-making activity; and 'integration strategies' regarding key actors within the organisation and the strategic management of micro level tensions. Again, whilst this paper does not directly relate to ideas of legitimacy, the ideas contained within it potentially pose problems that might be associated with the legitimacy of an organisation if the LIO were not to manage the problems presented by and risks associated with mission drift successfully.

Other ideas that may pose risks to the legitimacy of LIOs considering charging for support services include the idea of the institutional readiness of LIOs to provide support that is paid for. Harker and Burkeman (2007) for instance find that FLOs value experience and expertise. If LIOs are charging for a support service of which the quality does not meet FLOs expectations, this potentially poses a further legitimacy risk.

Pope et al. (2003) argue from an American perspective that non profit organisations lack expertise in brand awareness and in marketing. They assert that non profit organisations:

*"Struggle with a general lack of understanding of the true functions of marketing, difficulties in branding, and an inability to reach out to all of their target markets."*

This potentially poses another legitimacy risk to LIOs: if they are unable to successfully market their chargeable services, they risk not being taken

seriously by the FLOs which they are seeking to have purchase those services, and likewise from the broader organisational field.

Finally, there are governance considerations to be made by LIOs that may potentially pose risks to legitimacy. For example, Kreutzer (2009) examines the governance dilemmas presented during a move from providing services only to members, to providing services to non members also. She argues that in making this transition, there are effects on fundraising, transparency and co-operation, but that these effects are to be borne out through the governance of organisations. In turn, she argues that in such a transition, there are implications for - amongst other things - the recruitment and selection of board members; for the tasks of the board; for the relationships between the board and the chief officer. In short, if a LIO is going to make a transition into providing services outside its membership base, then there comes with it a need to transition the governance of that LIO accordingly, and if this does not happen then a risk to the legitimacy of that LIO may potentially be posed.

### 3.3 Legitimacy, actors and a shifting institutional backdrop

In the section that follows, I explore ideas of legitimacy and expand on them in the context of the research problem. As such, much of this section concentrates on linkages between legitimacy and the additional key concepts of the research problem, broadening out the focus on legitimacy to consider the role of actors and shifting institutional narratives in respect of legitimacy, and the specific role of legitimacy in LIO moves to chargeable support. In section 3.3.1 I examine the role of legitimacy in respect of a shifting institutional backdrop. In section 3.3.2 I build on this and examine the role of actors in considering and constructing ideas of legitimacy at times of institutional shift. Finally, in section 3.3.3 I explore the literature in relation to the research context of LIOs moving into chargeable support services.

### 3.3.1 Legitimacy and a shifting institutional narrative

It is worth paying some attention to the ways in which institutional shifts might play out within LIOs and their implications for ideas of legitimacy. In terms of characterising the external pressures involved with a changing institutional environment, Zucker provides an explanation relating predominantly to the external pressures being placed on the organisation. She argues (1987, p445) that:

*"Institutional elements invariably come from outside the organization. These elements cause change in organizations, but the impetus for action is unclear because the organization is in an "iron cage" (see DiMaggio 1987). When organizations respond to external institutional pressure (or possibly only to coercive pressure as in DiMaggio & Powell 1983), they protect their technical activities through decoupling elements of structure from other activities and from each other."*

Here, her argument appears to suggest that the pressure for change is largely borne from external, normative pressures. In the same paper, she also argues that institutions are highly resistant to change. Linking this perspective back to the research problem which examines how actors consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy, the implication might be that actors within the institutional environment may be resistant to shifts in said environment that seek for LIOs to commit to moves into chargeable support services, following her assertion relating to institutions being highly resistant to change. As with much of the literature detailed in this review, however, this does not consider whether it is actors within the institutions that are resistant to change or whether it is institutions, through their systems and processes, that are resistant to change. Therefore, the role of the actor lacks clarity in this respect.

Suchman (1995) in his characterisation of 'taken for granted' legitimacy (outlined in the previous section) argues that sometimes institutionalisation is so deeply embedded within those that are a part of the institution that any institutional change is integrated in the extent of the buy-in to the legitimacy of the institution. Here, he argues that change and disorder are therefore manageable, as legitimacy is so deeply ingrained that questioning will not

occur. This interpretation of a legitimacy so strong that actors will not question a change appears to remove any agency from the actors that are part of the institution, implying that they will 'sleep-walk' into anything that the institution deems necessary as they have already given the institution legitimacy. As linked to the research problem, this might imply that actors favour charging for services as the path of least resistance - in direct contrast to the implications of Zucker's (1987) arguments highlighted above. Suchman's characterisation could however mean that in an institution with pure legitimacy, there is no dissenting voice and no questioning that takes place: this could arguably appear unrealistic.

In arguments that appear to complement those raised by Suchman (1995), Ruef and Scott's (1998) study looks at hospital survival in changing institutional environments over a 46 year period. They argue that the hospitals that were the most 'institutionalised' were the ones most likely to survive, as they would be able to still secure legitimacy based on normative expectations. The implication follows that survival in a changing environment is contingent upon compliance with the expectations present within that institutional environment, which in turn make it easier to continue to secure resources and other critical survival-based tasks. However, this study concentrated on formalised vehicles of legitimacy in terms of formal organisational documents, and did not concentrate on any informal vehicles of legitimacy. It may be, for instance, that survival is based more on informal constructs such as successful relationships between the organisation as an institution and the organisational field and that in turn, success in formal institutional settings follows from there.

It is also important to note Ruef and Scott's argument that in order to sustain legitimacy in a changing institutional environment, energies invested in the management of an organisation will peak: this may have direct implications for the ways in which managers within LIOs consider and respond to ideas of legitimacy as opposed to other staff members. Such a consideration in terms of the energies invested in sustaining legitimacy at time of a shifting institutional environment bring about questions as to whether sustaining legitimacy is then seen as a 'task' of managers during times of institutional change, and whether in organisations where managers are over-worked, conflicts regarding

legitimacy may be more likely to arise. Diez-Martin et al. (2013) argue in relation to this that gaining and sustaining legitimacy should be indeed be a task for managers, as organisations with greater legitimacy go on to secure greater resources.

Henisz and Zelner (2005) also examine the case of legitimacy under change. Their arguments follow two main threads: the first is that it is emergent institutions who are more likely to progress with change, but if this change differs from the current institutional norms, opponents may use reference points within the institutional framework to "*illustrate inconsistency with prevailing notions of legitimacy*" (p361). Their second strand of argument links to institutions and institutional structures acting as 'moderators' of legitimacy - hence having a role of regulating or even suppressing change if it differs from the legitimate norm.

Henisz and Zelner's (2005) assertions are worthy of note given LIOs' variable history: some LIOs are long established, whilst others have grown from very little in the past 10-15 years. Their arguments might imply that the newer organisations might find that they are more likely and able to be flexible in their approach to and potential acceptance of chargeable support services, whilst older organisations might be resistant to this. This raises interesting questions as to what happens to would-be 'change agents' who form part of the persistent organisations, and whether such potential change agents in emergent institutions then move on to new emergent institutions as the new institution matures, or whether they become institutionalised over time and that their voices are stamped out as no longer being legitimate. Beyond this, questions then arise as to whether if would-be change agents are able to stay as part of a more mature institution, whether they lie in wait for an opportunity to make change or whether they again become institutionalised and conform with prevailing legitimacy ideas. These questions give rise to the need for more research as to the ways in which actors view legitimacy in institutions and when and how they might seek further or increased levels of legitimacy. Henisz and Zelner's second notion of institutions acting as moderators of legitimacy is also relevant here, given the focus on actors inherent in the research problem: there may be an implication that actors may seek to shape or influence institutional

direction in respect of charging, and such attempts may be quashed by the prevailing institution.

George et al. (2006) go some way towards answering some of these questions in their analysis of the cognitive underpinnings of institutions and change. They assert that (p347):

*"Patterns of institutional persistence and change depend on whether decision makers view environmental shifts as potential opportunities for or threats to gaining legitimacy."*

Such assertions regarding the viewing of institutions as threats or opportunities are relevant to this study in terms of the ways in which actors characterise legitimacy. The study states that where an organisation is threatened with a loss of resources, decision makers may 'underweight' their evaluations of the risks of potential loss of legitimacy and may 'overweight' any potential gains associated with a change path that is likely to lead them away from their current loss situation. Further, they also argue that (p354):

*"Threats to resources motivate organizational leaders to conduct broader searches for alternatives that may extend beyond the bounds of social acceptability and that may promote risk-seeking behavior".*

If institutional shift is seen as an opportunity therefore, 'decision makers' will go further to create legitimacy surrounding the new direction than if the shift is seen as a threat - and further, these views of opportunities and shifts may indeed be linked to the ability to secure resources. It is likely that through George et al.'s assertions, moves into chargeable support services may therefore be seen as an opportunity as opposed to a threat - unless the risk of crowding out of future funding is seen as likely to outweigh the potential benefits of any income from charging.

This section of the literature review has examined some of the linkages between legitimacy and a shifting institutional environment. Arguments arising from the literature include:

- That such shifts in institutional environments arise as a result of normative external pressures, but that those pressures are not sufficient

to sustain that change and securing change internally within an organisation can be difficult.

- That organisational change in a shifting institutional environment is easier if actors are strongly embedded within the environment and view change through a lens of 'taken for granted' legitimacy.
- That the most 'institutionalised' organisations are those that are most easily able to weather change in a shifting institutional environment.
- That change in line with such a shifting environment takes increased management resources in order to secure legitimacy, but that levels of increased legitimacy bring with them increased resources and therefore this expenditure of effort is prudent.
- That emergent institutions are more likely to be able to respond to institutional shifts than established institutions.
- That opponents of change within the institutional environment may draw reference points from currently accepted and 'legitimate' norms in order to point out differences and argue against change.
- That institutions may act as 'moderators' of legitimacy in the face of potential change.

In the next section I build on ideas relating to legitimacy and shifting institutional environments in turning to the role that actors may play relation to ideas of legitimacy in a shifting institutional environment.

### *3.3.2 Actors, legitimacy and linkages with a shifting institutional environment*

In order to best consider the role of actors in relation to legitimacy at times of institutional shift, it is worth pausing to consider the role of actors in shaping institutions as an overarching principle. Arguably one of the earliest signals towards actors as having a role in institution formation arises from Stinchcombe's (1968) definition of an institution as "*a structure in which powerful people are committed to some value or interest*". This definition of an institution appears to allow some scope to show that actors can both preserve and change institutions - albeit only with a focus on powerful people. The question here is therefore as to what the role of the 'average' actor within an

institution may be, and if they too have the capacity to shape institutions - which has a direct bearing on the research problem in terms of the ways which actors respond to ideas of legitimacy.

Thelen, Longstreth and Steinmo's (1992, p2) definition of institutions in which *"both formal structures and informal rules and procedures that structure conduct"*, with the noteworthy inclusion of informal structures, arguably gives some space for actors to consider, construct or replicate institutions. In practice, such informal rules and procedures may in practice play out through ideas of what the actor views as legitimate for the organisation.

Beckert (1999) argues that *"one of the problems facing institutional organization theory has been the question of how to deal with interest-driven behaviour and institutional change. If organisational structures and strategies are shaped by institutional environments, what is the role of 'strategic choice'"?* Beckert proposes a model that synthesises the role of strategic choice (i.e. the agency of actors) with the role of institutions in driving institutional environments forwards. Here, he proposes the following:

- *"Strategic agency can only be expected if institutionalised structures prevail which reduce uncertainty for organisational actors" (p782)*
- *"Strategic agency which violates existing institutional rules can be expected in situations characterised by relatively high degrees of certainty within an institutional field" (p783)*
- *"Under conditions of greater certainty, institutionalised practices can be expected to be the more resistant to strategic agency the more they enjoy high levels of social legitimacy, and the more they have the backing of powerful agents" (p791)*

Ultimately, the argument follows here that where there is more certainty in the institutionalised environment, the stronger the basis of the rules and norms within which the institution operates, and in turn, the institutional framework provides a basis for which an actor operating within it can provide strategic calculations as to the effectiveness of their actions. However, the more certainty available within the institutional environment, the more easily the institution is able to resist the effects of actors' agency. This model is interesting

as it provides a basis for actors to have agency within a set of constraining rules, and implies that the more rigid the institution, the easier it is for the actor to establish agency. However, if the actor's agency is sufficiently developed and the institution's structure has become sufficiently weak, it may be questioned whether actors can then assert pressure on the institution itself: in LIOs, this might potentially play out in the form of actors collectively seeking to take on a particular direction with regards to either proactively endorsing, or resisting, chargeable support services against what would initially appear to be the dominant institutional stance.

Bitektine (2011) discusses how actors as 'evaluators' of social judgements of organisations make decisions surrounding the legitimacy, status and reputation of a particular organisation. Here, he argues that under situations of uncertainty or change, there are numerous processes which an evaluator will go through in order to assess legitimacy. Further, he argues that actors make judgements using two broad classes of legitimacy: cognitive legitimacy based on known organisational forms and recognised structural characteristics, and socio-political legitimacy where the actor benchmarks against prevailing social norms. He asserts (p165) that in situations of uncertainty, evaluators will seek to categorise legitimacy based on a *"familiar organizational form that most closely resembles the one that the focal organization possesses"*. The implication here is that a radical shift away from familiar ground is less likely to be seen as legitimate as the structures associated with such a radical shift would be less familiar. With respect to judgements surrounding sociopolitical legitimacy, he argues (p165) that *"an organization with unknown sociopolitical legitimacy will be categorized as legitimate unless the evaluator has evidence to the contrary"*.

Further, Bitektine (2011) goes on to present a model of the processes used by actors in order to consider 'social judgements' about organisations. This model is important as it draws some parallels with the early steps within the eight stage process under which actors make legitimacy judgements that will be presented as part of the discussion later in Chapters 6 and 7. Bitektine's model is not only limited to legitimacy judgements but also judgements about reputation and social status, particularly in relation to the ways in which actors may further their agenda in relation to their legitimacy judgements. Under the

first stage of this model, the social context surrounding the decision is said to influence the judgement form, be it cognitive legitimacy, sociopolitical legitimacy, reputation or status. The evaluator also has to make a decision regarding whether to use the judgements of other social actors to inform their own judgement. Further to this, Bitektine argues that the actor may engage in more 'search' activity or may decide to use heuristics (Kahneman and Tversky, 1974) in order to provide simple rules of thumb to simplify their assessment. This decision will be based on factors such as the time available for additional search; the information already available; the evaluator's motivation and the 'cost' of the search. The actor then performs the social judgement based on ideas of relevance, coherence and credibility, including consideration of how their own judgement will be perceived by others.

Whilst this model is comprehensive, it overlooks some areas which may affect such decisions around legitimacy under change. For example, using an example that may apply to the chargeable support services context, an actor that is more risk-seeking than risk-averse may be more open to radical moves into chargeable support services than an actor who was pre-disposed to be risk averse. I therefore argue that one of the major elements missing from this model surrounds the personal characteristics and pre-dispositions of particular actors making the decision and the values and preferences with which they come to the legitimacy judgement.

Creed et al. (2010) provide a perspective drawn from the American literature which sheds further light on how actors can become agents of change within institutions. They discuss the case of how LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) Ministers in the Protestant church deal with conflicts between their personal life and their institutional life. Their suggestion is that there are three levels at which institutional contradiction with the self occurs: the first is that the actor denies their own sense of self and internalises the institutional contradiction; the second is that the actor accepts their sense of self and seeks to reconcile it with the institution through identity reconciliation work; and thirdly is the actor challenging the orthodoxy from within through 'role claiming'. This model provides a useful insight into the processes that actors may internalise before deciding how to act with respect to an institution within which they sit: not

all actors here are painted as seeking or valuing agency, which is seen with the first category where the actor internalises their conflict and stays loyal to the institution. At the same time however, the actors that decide to 'be the change' and tackle the institution from within co-exist within the same model. What is not discussed here and is potentially a gap in the literature is what process the actor goes through in order to decide whether to challenge the institution or not - or indeed if they go through a process at all.

Jackson (2009) finds cyclical linkages between actors and institutions: he argues that actors are shaped by institutions, but that in turn actors can go on to shape institutions. Further, Jackson argues for institutions to be viewed as non-deterministic contexts for action. He argues that actors can view and interpret the same institution in different ways and that this gives rise to conflicts which are resolved over time, resulting in gradual and progressive shifts in the make-up of the institution as time goes on. He also asserts that institutions are not "infinitely pliable" and that actors make reference to themselves and their positions in the context of the institution; be that for it, or against it.

Although Jackson's arguments establish a basis for the ways in which actors can exist with agency from the constraining forces of prevailing institutions, this lacks empirical support as the paper is a theoretical one, and hence there is some need for the relationship between actors and institutions relating to Jackson's arguments to be explored empirically. However, many of Jackson's (2009) arguments are reinforced by an earlier work from Seo and Creed (2002). Their paper proposes a dialectical model of institutional change, which positions institutions as a series of contradictions - for example, the contrast between needing to secure legitimacy and to be technically efficient. They view actors here as a mediating force who seek to resolve the contradictions embedded within the institutional environment and hence possess agency to that end in order to change the institution, and it is this view of actors that appears similar to that of Jackson's.

Battilana et al. (2009) also argue that institutions can change as a result of the actors within them: they argue that within organisations, there exists a number of *"actors who introduce changes that diverge from existing institutions in a*

*given environment"* (p95). Their model suggests that there must be enabling characteristics in order for an actor to engage in arguing for an organisation to undergo change, and they must involve a combination of both the right field characteristics and the actor's social position. If these conditions are met, there is a possible emergence of institutional change, which is then contingent upon the actor creating a vision for divergent change, and further actors mobilising around this vision. Only if and when this divergent change becomes diffused does the change initiated by the actor become institutionalised.

Lok (2010) proposes that actors re-work their sense of self based on the influence of 'change-agents' who set out to control and shape institutional character: to some extent, this draws parallels to Weber's (1924/1968 'charismatic' legitimacy and Suchman's (1995) 'personal' legitimacy. Similarly to Jackson (2009), Lok discusses the ways in which actors can both resist or accommodate the institutional rules being directed at them - and how these ideas of resistance or accommodation can occur simultaneously. He suggests that actors not only have agency from the institutions within which they sit, but also that they are able to adapt themselves strategically to the situations they find themselves in, in order to blend the new environment and the old environment appropriately, dependent upon context and to further their cause. If actors within are indeed able to adapt themselves against shifting institutional constraints, then the question follows as to the role of actors within LIOs against a changing institutional backdrop, and whether they seek to assert their sense of self or whether they transition alongside the changing institutional environment. In particular, if an actor perceives a transition towards changing as illegitimate, it may be interesting to explore the ways in which they seek to resist or accommodate institutional change, relative to their own perceptions of legitimacy.

In terms of responses if an actor does indeed perceive any transition to be illegitimate, Oliver (1991) sets out a typology of various organisational responses to institutional processes: namely, these are acquiesce, compromise, avoid, defy and manipulate. Although these responses are said to occur at an organisational level, the underpinning notion is that it is actors enacting such responses. This may offer an insight into the ways in which actors respond in

environments going through institutional shifts. If actors consider and respond in a number of different ways, it is worth questioning what drives them to respond in such different ways, as opposed to conforming to institutional pressures. Their views of legitimacy may have a role to play in these changing responses: for example, if actors within LIOs do not perceive charging to be legitimate, they may be more likely to respond using some of Oliver's conceptions such as defying or manipulating, as opposed to compromising.

Oliver (1991, p160) also argues for five predictors of which response will be used at the organisational level and directed towards the external institutional environment, including 'cause', which deals with why the organisation is being pressured to conform with institutional rules or norms; 'constituents' which relates to who it is that is exerting pressures on the organisation; 'content', relating to which norms the organisation is being pressured to conform to; 'control' dealing with the means by which institutional pressures are being exerted; and 'context', dealing with the environmental context within which institutional pressures are being exerted. It seems likely that similar predictors may occur at an actor level, and although Oliver's paper does not directly deal with institutional shift at the actor level, it does pose an opportunity to suggest that examination of these processes at an actor level may be fruitful for a deeper insight into the ways in which actors consider and respond to legitimacy in a changing institutional environment.

In reference to actor level responses to institutional shifts over time, Leblebici et al. (1991) provide a historic examination of institutional change in the US radio broadcasting industry and its evolution over time. A key argument raised by Leblebici et al. (1991) is that change happens as a result of actors responding to new ideas, reaching agreement, and then accepting new processes. This very much provides a conception of actors working to form a consensus in order to progress: this appears to lack any accounting for dominant voices or opposing figures in reaching any kind of consensus, or understanding of the ways in which consensus is achieved.

To some extent, these ideas are addressed by Suddaby and Greenwood (2005), who provide insight at the actor level which has not been addressed

previously. They address the ways in which actors promote particular points of view against a shifting institutional environment, or how they negate those of others, by employing rhetoric. It should be noted that as such, the term "rhetorical strategies" used later in Chapters 6 and 7 originates from this paper. The paper appears to be one of only a small number of papers with a direct focus on actor strategies in seeking to shape institutions (i.e. taken from an actor-led perspective). Here, Suddaby and Greenwood use the case of moves by one of the 'Big Five' accounting firms in the USA into a takeover of a law firm, to document the strategies used by actors to further their own perceptions of legitimacy. Suddaby and Greenwood find that:

*"Proponents and opponents could be distinguished not only by their stance toward the new form but also by the vocabulary used to describe it and by the referent texts from which they drew their rhetoric."*

They go on to differentiate these stances based on the rhetorical strategies employed by actors to seek to further their own perspective. These were namely:

- *An 'ontological' strategy, based on what can or cannot exist and co-exist;*
- *A 'historical' strategy, dwelling on ideas of history and tradition;*
- *A 'teleological' strategy, in which arguments were based on "divine purpose" (p54);*
- *A 'cosmological' strategy, which emphasises 'inevitability' because of forces outside the control of the actors;*
- *A 'value-based' strategy, which depends on values and wider belief systems.*

Whilst Suddaby and Greenwood's paper appears to break new ground in exploring institutional change from the position of actors and the strategies they use - implicitly or explicitly - in determining a new institutional direction, questions arise as to whether outside of such a formal setting as this (which was conducted through an ongoing case in the courts), whether additional or different rhetorical strategies arise. However, the implication for chargeable support services in LIOs is that actors may employ a number of different

strategies in order to convince others of their own perspective in relation to whether charging is, or is not, legitimate.

Arguments established throughout this section come together to offer a vision of actors having the potential to enact agency from the institutions of which they are a part at times of institutional shift, when such actors feel sufficiently strongly in relation to the need to depart from prevailing institutional logics. However, a number of the papers cited argue that institutional conditions must be 'right' in order for any actor level influence on the institutional environment to progress, and further, some argue that the actor themselves must be of the correct social standing or possess a critical mass of support. The final focus on Suddaby and Greenwood's (2005) paper moves to highlighting the strategies which actors may employ to further their worldview of legitimacy, and similar strategies feature later in the thesis. While there is clearly a body of literature established in relation to the role of actors in relation to a shifting institutional backdrop, what remains to be seen is the ways in which actors use their individual conceptions of legitimacy in shaping the direction of their institution.

In the final sub-section here, I turn to explore ideas of chargeable support against a shifting institutional environment.

### *3.3.3 Chargeable support services and the changing institutional environment*

In this section of the literature review, I review recent literature relating to LIOs charging for support services. Given the use of literature to draw together a picture of the policy environment surrounding LIOs charging for support service in Chapter 2, I only deal in this section of the chapter with literature that deals directly with the idea of LIOs charging for support services, chargeable support services in the voluntary sector, or legitimacy in the voluntary sector.

Northmore et al.'s (2003) study of the Community Fund's grant making programme to local infrastructure organisations is arguably the first comprehensive study of voluntary sector infrastructure funding at a local level. One of the more interesting arguments arising from this report (p4) is that:

*"There was general agreements between [LIOs] and beneficiaries that funding [LIOs] to support infrastructure development achieved more than would have been possible had the funding been given direct to beneficiary organisations."*

This is particularly topical given recent moves towards demand-led funding models such as voucher based support as will be highlighted later in this section.

Macmillan et al. (2007) in a study for NAVCA described the situation that LIOs were facing in the immediate years ahead as posing *"significant anxiety"* to LIOs, and being *"subject to considerable uncertainty"*. Here, the authors raise two additional arguments relating to LIO funding: the first being that the extent to which LIOs perceived potential financial vulnerability in the coming years being related to the extent to which they were funded by local government sources. The second argument relates to the striking nature of the extent of dependency upon the Big Lottery Fund's BASIS programme to provide support over the three to five years to follow. This finding was echoed in my own research and is detailed in Chapter 5. In this study, there was no direct mention of chargeable support services but there was some mention of potential rationalisation of services between LIOs, which set the tone for future years. The analysis was conducted at the LIO level and it raises some interesting questions surrounding the attitudes of actors towards some of the uncertainty mentioned above, and the dynamics that this gave rise to at the actor level within the case study LIOs.

Macmillan's (2011) paper regarding the 'Supporting a Stronger Civil Society' government consultation on the future of infrastructure points to the nature and extent of support provided to LIOs being likely to change. The paper provides a critical perspective regarding the consultation and in particular notes that the language in the consultation may provide 'hidden assumptions' about the ways in which the government would like the sector to move. Whilst this paper does not directly mention charging, it does set up the context for the 'Transforming Local Infrastructure' (TLI) programme that followed in 2012. The associated

funding was used by a number of LIOs to explore options available to them regarding charging for support services (Munro and Mynott, 2014).

Further, Macmillan's (2013) paper reflects on the funding climate for LIOs following the government's Supporting a Civil Society consultation. It documents the introduction of the TLI programme; Big Assist, and Building Capabilities for Impact and Legacy (BCIL) initiatives (see Chapter 2 for more information), and asserts that through the combined efforts from government and from the Big Lottery Fund, moves towards a demand-led market approach for LIOs are being given significant credence in the policy arena. Macmillan raised a number of questions to drive a future research agenda, including how support needs for FLOs can be established; how FLOs can make an informed choice surrounding their support provider; and the value of capacity building work. He also outlines five key tenets of the debate surround LIOs 'market-making'. These are:

- whether there is a viable market for capacity building and to what extent it is reliant upon public funding;
- whether and how the market should be 'open' or 'managed';
- what kinds of support are advantaged in any forthcoming settlement - and which are disadvantaged;
- How the 'voice' and 'advocacy' elements will be provided for under a new model and what that model looks like;
- How should such a model as BCIL should be evaluated.

These questions clearly set out a strong research agenda for the future relating to LIOs providing support services in a demand-led environment, but again, questions arise as to how actors within LIOs will form part of this agenda.

Following this, Macmillan and Ellis Paine (2014) supplement the research on demand-led services by providing evidence from the BCIL programme, based on a rapid evidence assessment of literature and grey literature; a secondary analysis of the 2010 National Survey of Charities and Social Enterprises, and a number of workshops incorporating the voices of funders, providers and researchers. They found that there is strong evidence showing the complexity of capability building, and the need for interventions to be tailored - but they

found a lack of evidence surrounding forms of diagnosis; the impact on voice and influence services; the impact of capability building on both FLOs and end users, and on forms of charging. Here, it is evident that there is the basis for more research to be done, but there is also a need for research which involves service users from FLOs, and front line staff as actors within LIOs in order to ensure that their voices are heard.

Munro and Mynott's (2014) paper for NAVCA which explores some of the uses of TLI funding by LIOs goes some way to redressing this balance and addressing the voices of LIOs, but not at an actor level *per se*. The paper draws on a survey of NAVCA members to typify some of the work going on under TLI. The transformation work does not only apply to funding activities, but a number of cases were documented of LIOs moving towards demand-led models, and in one case, fully implementing one as a trial (see Chapter 2 for more information). However, given that the work evaluates the effects of TLI, there is also no counter voice reported within it, sharing the voices of actors within LIOs who were not successful with TLI bids, or who are not moving towards demand-led services, and this therefore skews the picture to paint one that is particularly positive when in reality for LIOs, this may not be the case. Again, there is also no mention of the reactions and perspectives of members of staff or volunteers as actors within LIOs, but the findings are instead reported at an organisational level. However, the paper does provide an interesting perspective into how some of the models for charging adopted by LIOs are taking shape.

### 3.4 Summary: grounding the research in the literature

In this literature review, I have set out to explore the research basis surrounding the study, particularly in relation to ideas of legitimacy, the ways in which actors influence institutions especially against a shifting institutional backdrop, and the literature available relating to LIOs charging for support services.

In relation to the legitimacy literature, I highlighted a number of typologies of legitimacy but very few of these related to legitimacy as perceived through the

eyes of the actor; rather they focused on legitimacy at the institutional level - i.e. as perceived by and surrounding institutions. I later examined the literature surrounding legitimacy against a shifting institutional backdrop, and although a small number of models have been proposed in respect of this, there is limited accounting for the actor's voice and perceptions of legitimacy in driving or rejecting institutional shifts. Further, I examined the risks to legitimacy for a LIO moving into chargeable support services and identified a number of potential risks, including:

- risks to relationships, reputation, responsiveness, and resources;
- regulatory risks including the need to meet the public benefit requirement and to avoid mission drift;
- technical challenges such as readiness to deliver chargeable support services;
- LIOs' ability to market themselves, and
- issues relating to governance.

I also established the role of actors in seeking to shape institutions, and paid particular attention to the role of their perceptions of legitimacy in this respect. Although the body of literature lacks strong consensus on the ways in which actors contribute to institutional change, or indeed to institutions, where propositions have been made about the ways in which they do so, they often lack the voice of the actors in explaining their perspective. They also often provide attention to ideas of 'what' happens as opposed to 'how' and 'why', so there is a clear gap in the literature relating to ideas of how or why actors seek to shape institutions, rather than looking at those processes from an institutional level in a purely descriptive way.

Finally, I gave an overview of the voluntary sector literature relating to LIOs charging for support services, and whilst there are a number of papers that treat these notions already, there is limited literature concentrating on the voice of actors within LIOs themselves in respect of this topic. Likewise, the majority of the literature available in this respect does not provide consideration of the ways in which the changes surrounding charging are playing out within

organisations, but instead provides a critique at a higher institutional level than this.

My argument from here is that the key gaps in the literature arising as a result of this literature review are:

- Actor-level treatments of legitimacy: i.e. how do actors perceive, consider and respond to ideas of legitimacy at an actor level as opposed to an institutional level?
- Understanding of actor voices in terms of change relating to legitimacy: i.e. if actors perceive institutional illegitimacy, do they seek to rectify it, and conversely, if they perceive legitimacy, are there any circumstances under which they challenge it?
- The 'how' and 'why' of actors seeking to shape institutions - what strategies do they use and what are their motivations?
- Actor voice in respect of the practicalities of changes towards charging in LIOs.

Having now reviewed the literature, in the next chapter, I will provide an overview of my research methodology.

## **Chapter 4: Methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter will detail my approach to the research methodology. I begin by discussing my research question in section 4.2. I then move on to discuss the philosophical approach that bounds the research in section 4.3, with a particular focus on the effects of my philosophical approach of pragmatism on the research focus and methodology.

In section 4.4, I discuss the methodological approach itself: that of a multi-sited ethnography. This section addresses the reasons for choosing a multi-sited ethnographic approach, including some discussion of my exploratory interviews prior to the fieldwork commencing, and how they shaped the research methodology. I also discuss the selection of the sites under the multi-sited approach, before detailing the practicalities of access arrangements for visiting each research site. The final part of this section addresses the nature of my engagement with the research participants, as an overt researcher with experience of working in LIOs.

In section 4.5 I detail the methods I used to gather information whilst in the field. These include the undertaking of semi-structured interviews; observations of board meetings; writing daily field notes; taking copies of key documents such as strategic plans; the use of photographs; compiling copies of emails, and use of additional information such as sketches of building layouts and other relevant graphics.

I then go on to discuss the analytical approach in section 4.6, with reference to data management using NVivo 10, and template analysis as the chosen analytical approach. It should be noted that my analytical process is described in detail alongside the discussion in Chapter 6 rather than in this chapter as the template analysis approach that I took to analysing the data sits very closely alongside the development of findings and theory.

Finally in section 4.7, I discuss the ethical issues associated with the chosen approach, and how I attempted to counter these, before summarising the chapter in section 4.8.

## 4.2 Research question

My research question evolved from three early questions, all of which arose as a direct result of two exploratory interviews I conducted early in the research programme.

The exploratory interviews consisted of one interview with a representative of a national level funding body - Alex - and one interview with a representative of a national level umbrella body for LIOs - Peter. Both interviews have been anonymised. Alex's role with the funding body was closely involved in helping them consider and progress their own position in respect of LIOs charging for support services. As such, Alex had spent a significant amount of time consulting with both LIOs and with other funding bodies, privileging him to a level of detail regarding the debates in respect of chargeable support services at both a local and a national level. Peter's role with the national umbrella body involved managing the umbrella body's strategic development. As such, he again had a clear understanding of the debates relating to chargeable support services, not only in term of having held a number of discussions with FLOs in this respect but also in relation to having considered a chargeable approach for the umbrella body's own service provision to its member LIOs.

From the interviews I established eight themes whereby there were clear issues of complexity in relation to chargeable support services: these are detailed in Appendix A. Arising from these themes, I then identified three questions which allowed for a more in depth exploration of the complexities established through the exploratory interviews. These questions were:

- 1. How do actors operating within LIOs respond to a shifting institutional environment through formal and informal narratives, with respect to charging for support services?*

2. *How are legitimacy concerns surrounding charging for support services played out within the organisational setting of LIOs?*
3. *How do LIOs and actors within them consider and respond to any normative expectations which they perceive from a shifting institutional environment with respect to charging for support services?*

However, I became aware that these questions were somewhat convergent in places, and also that the issue that appeared most pertinent to the research context was the concept of legitimacy, around which other ideas of the narratives of actors and responses to normative expectations surrounding charging might hang. Questions of legitimacy can arouse the subtle complexities surrounding the basis for changes in institutional narratives and actor perceptions of such changes, actor reactions to perceived normative pressures from the external institutional environment, and the dilemmas presented in various aspects of legislative legitimacy such as ideas surrounding the public benefit requirement in charity law, and the issue of mission drift from the point of view of a LIO with charitable aims (see section 1.4.3). As such, I combined the principles underpinning the three questions in order to achieve one overarching research question, which is the one presented at the beginning of this section and the one that I brought to the ethnographic field.

My overarching research question - as also noted in Chapter 1 - is therefore:

***How do actors within LIOs consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy surrounding an institutional shift towards charging FLOs for support services?***

#### 4.3 Philosophical approach

The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought (Bullock et al, 1977) states that 'truth' has four possible meanings. Firstly, that *"the property implicitly ascribed to a proposition by belief in or assertion of it; the property implicitly ascribed to a proposition by disbelief in or negation of its falsity"*; secondly that *"some philosophers, holding that all awareness of facts is itself propositional, i.e. that it*

*necessarily involves the assertion of some proposition, maintain that truth is a relation of coherence between propositions".* The third possible meaning states that *"pragmatists define truth in terms of the satisfactoriness of belief, the empirically verifying fulfilment of expectations being only one form of this"*; whilst the fourth definition suggests that *"occasionally truth has been taken to be a quality rather than a relation, a view which alone has some plausibility in connection with analytic propositions whose truth depends not on something external to them but on the meaning that is intrinsic to them."* The section that follows details the chosen philosophical approach of pragmatism, where truth takes the third definition above in terms of *"the satisfactoriness of belief"*. Put simply, pragmatism asserts that truth should be viewed in terms of knowledge that successfully guides action through the understanding of the 'practical consequences' of a particular path (Pierce, 1878; James, 1907).

The research seeks to explore the ways in which actors within LIOs consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy against the backdrop of a shifting institutional environment. The particular focus on how actors 'consider, construct and respond to' ideas of legitimacy falls into line with a pragmatist philosophy, as it privileges information regarding how actors use their perceptions and considerations of legitimacy to guide action. The question is therefore seeking answers in respect of an inherently pragmatist principle, in examining how actors use their views of legitimacy to shape their responses - in turn, privileging knowledge creation that falls into line with a pragmatist perspective.

Throughout the research, I give consideration to actors experiencing multiple truths which vary from actor to actor, in turn rejecting the stance of a single universal truth. However, in acknowledging the presence of the constraining forces of the institutional environment, I also assert that there is a world that exists independently of the actors within it, and that actors may therefore seek - be it explicitly or at a subliminal level - to guide their course of action within the constraints of an independent institutional environment. This assumption, which positions actors as guiding their way through an independent institutional environment in seeking to achieve some kind of utility or practical consequence, has implications for the knowledge formation of the study in terms of privileging

the systems through which actors consider and then respond to an independent environment around them.

Implicit in my pragmatist approach, I assert that actors use frameworks and guiding principles - again, be it at an explicit or subliminal level - in order to evaluate their beliefs and course of action. These are manifested in the worldviews of legitimacy detailed in Chapters 6 and 7, for example. Such framing tools as the worldviews referred to here and later in the thesis are in turn seen, through my pragmatist approach, as guiding actors towards a practically useful outcome. Seeking to establish an organisational direction which the actor deems to be legitimate takes on a pragmatic character. Indeed, arguably the very focus on legitimacy itself takes a pragmatic character, as it privileges knowledge formation in terms of that which is then used by actors to justify. Whether that be the justification of action, direction or existence, such justifications are useful to the actors in establishing validity to exist and to proceed to act.

Put simply therefore, through the employment of a pragmatist stance I assert that actors possess some agency from their institutional environment, and that they seek to guide their actions within said institutional environment using frameworks that allow them to assess the satisfactoriness of their belief as relative to said environment. In turn, my philosophical approach follows that actors then choose the path or outcome which is most useful, or pragmatic. Following from the above, my pragmatist approach in turn privileges knowledge formation which is based upon framing, seeking, and justifying the most useful outcome within a constraining institutional environment. Ultimately, my focus on actor worldviews of legitimacy with respect to the prevailing institutional environment surrounding them provides a distinct focus on how actors navigate and make sense of an independent external reality.

Section 4.3.1 gives an overview of pragmatist philosophy at large; before I move on to detail my own philosophical commitments in the context of pragmatism in section 4.3.2. Following this, in section 4.3.3, I discuss the application of pragmatism to the research problem, with particular respect to how this influenced the choice of methodological approach.

### *4.3.1 Pragmatist philosophical tradition*

The research is underpinned by a pragmatist philosophical perspective. This approach recognises the research participant's active role in knowledge formation, despite the bounds of an independent external reality. Key to the pragmatist commitment is the principle of truth assessments made in terms of their usefulness, or 'practical consequences' (Pierce, 1878; James, 1907). In particular, pragmatism focuses on how knowledge may guide the achievement of social objectives, commitment to action, or the furthering of practice. As applied to this study, my adoption of such an approach privileges in terms of knowledge formation the idea that actors do indeed consider and respond to their situation in a way that supports their useful navigation through the institutional environment. At times of institutional shift this pragmatist approach means an orientation of knowledge formation towards frameworks and guiding principles that support the ways in which actors view and respond to such a shift in a way that maximises utility for them.

The pragmatist tradition can be traced back to the work of Pierce (1878), although beyond the early support of James (1907, 1909) and Dewey (1929a; 1929b), who helped popularise pragmatism somewhat, the idea then lay dormant for some decades before becoming re-established by scholars such as Rorty (1979; 1982), Putnam (1994b); Misak (2007) and Malachowski (2010).

The early work of Pierce (1878) sought to establish pragmatism as a principle that was able to pull together science and religion to answer how one guides action through what may be argued to be opposing belief sets. To this end, Pierce argued for the 'pragmatic maxim' as a way of giving clarification to scientific hypothesis, which would deem that in a situation where two hypotheses were in conflict, the one with the most practically useful consequences would be deemed pragmatically 'correct'. Pierce, however, in his introduction of the pragmatic maxim, sought to establish pragmatism as a branch of scientific enquiry that was able to fill the void between science and religion. Consequently, Pierce's scientific approach to the pragmatic maxim meant that he went on to try and defend the rule from a scientific perspective. As such, Pierce's early establishment of pragmatism held a somewhat narrow

focus, although this went on to be broadened by James (1907) and Dewey (1929a; 1929b).

James' (1907) series of lectures on pragmatism sought to further develop pragmatism as straddling the bounds of science and morality, by establishing a distinction between the 'tough minded' and the 'tender minded'. Arguably this distinction was rather a distinction between those which valued empiricism and those which did not, where he describes the 'tender minded' as being optimistic and valuing ideals, principles and morality. James argued for the need to apply an overarching 'mediating philosophy' between the two naturally conflicting viewpoints, and as such, he establishes pragmatism as a way for settling disputes. James argues that it is "practical difference" that should solve said dispute, and sometimes negate the dispute entirely, whereby the approach which has a practically applicable outcome is that which is more useful, and hence seen as valid.

James' (1907) assertion that truth under a pragmatist paradigm is that which becomes action through its practical difference, is an assertion that applies well to the research problem. I privilege examination of - and in turn, knowledge formation relating to - the practical difference of charging options (to charge or not to charge) and their relative legitimacy. In turn, the idea of 'practical difference' is privileged in terms of my focus on how actors consider and respond to what they believe to be legitimate, in a shifting institutional environment whereby new directions are being evaluated. If actors perceive an outcome or a direction to be legitimate they are also likely to cite it as the most pragmatically 'correct' in that an outcome which the actor views as legitimate will provide a practical difference that is more useful than an outcome which in the actor's legitimacy worldview would not be legitimate. As such, through seeking to establish the ideas of legitimacy that actors use to guide their responses to the changing institutional environment, the pragmatist approach frames my knowledge contribution as one which seeks to establish the ways in which actors not only frame but respond to the shifting institutional environment. In short, such a pragmatist approach heightens my focus on 'response' in addition to framing of legitimacy ideas.

It was Dewey (1929a; 1929b) who went on to establish pragmatism as a broader philosophical school, taking its contribution outside of simply being a way for clarifying arguments and scientific principles. Rather, Dewey establishes pragmatism as rejecting a clear distinction between theory and practice, in turn arguing that what shapes practice in terms of practically useful truths may then inform theory. The establishment of this principle broadens out the philosophical base of pragmatism as more than simply an 'extension to' scientific enquiry, and can also be easily demonstrated in the scenario above, whereby truths experienced by different actors or groups of actors go on to shape their actions and in turn shift the reality, blurring the boundary between theory and practice.

After a hiatus in the development and support of pragmatist philosophy throughout the middle of the twentieth century, recent decades have seen the re-establishment of pragmatism. Sayer's (1981) position, which often typifies the pragmatist paradigm as viewed in its current context, attacks the correspondence theory of truth inherent within the positivist approach, whilst suggesting the existence of a mid-ground which locates itself between an objective ontology and a subjective epistemology. Within this mid-ground, Sayer argues that objectivism can still be applied to socially constructed knowledge about the independent reality. In short, Sayer's argument suggests that reality is independent, but our understanding of it can be influenced by social construction, and that how we socially perceive that independent reality influences our actions within it. It is this view which is reflected in the research problem itself: by seeking to understand actors' legitimacy perceptions and how they play out in terms of moves towards chargeable services, the research examines the space between an independent reality and the ways in which social construction influences that reality.

This position shares some similarities with Bhaskar's (1978) position that defines critical realism. However, pragmatism goes a step further in highlighting the cycle between theory and practice informing each other as influential factors of the socially constructed element of knowledge about reality, and it is this link between actor knowledge becoming part of a socially constructed independent reality that I am interested in.

My primary use of a pragmatist paradigm in framing the research does not closely follow the scientific aspects of early pragmatists; rather my approach is informed by Sayer's (1981) arguments of an independent reality that is influenced by social construction. As applied to the research problem, this gives a philosophical approach in which the social construction of ideas around legitimacy are investigated in order to understand how those socially constructed ideas, positioned within an independent institutional environment, then influence the way in which actors within LIOs seek to influence the direction and decisions of their own organisation and their broader organisational field.

#### *4.3.2 Researcher philosophical commitments*

My research interest in this subject began as a practitioner within a LIO who was directly involved in making decisions surrounding moves into chargeable support services (see also section 1.8 for more information). Moreover, through my own work I was able to observe that there were conflicting dialogues both endorsing and opposing the idea of chargeable support services, and that it appeared those dialogues were played out through groups of actors seeking to influence decisions and directions relating to chargeable services. The perspective that I brought to the research having been a practitioner in the field was a focus on action and practical consequences, and in particular, a focus on how actors shape action in spite of an independent reality surrounding their existence.

These influences derived from practice contributed to my philosophical approach which accepts that actors may view the world differently to one another, and that those views may in turn be used to shape changes within the external world itself, but in particular, that knowledge surrounding what is perceived to be true is that which provides the underpinning for practical action. This approach has continued to underpin my thinking. My personal philosophical commitments are based therefore, on an independent reality, but one in which meanings within and understandings of such an independent

reality are socially constructed in such a way that said meanings and understandings are seen as true if they are useful in guiding action. Further, my commitments include that the social construction of those meanings are then used to inform judgements in respect of action, and that knowledge in relation to those judgements underpinning action forms the basis of an actor's truth until any frameworks guiding such knowledge prove to be no longer practically useful.

The next sub-section will detail how this perspective impacted on my choice of methodological approach: a multi-sited ethnography.

#### *4.3.3 Influence of pragmatist approach on methodological approach*

In seeking to address the research problem from an approach underpinned by a pragmatist philosophical paradigm, I wanted to use a methodological approach which would allow insight into actor understandings of and approaches to action in respect of chargeable support services and their legitimacy. This was not only in respect of whether actors were in favour of or against charging and the models of charging they favoured, but also in respect of the judgements they used about whether charging was a legitimate outcome to pursue, and the processes informing such judgements. The pragmatist paradigm elevates the nature of practical consequences in the formation of truth and I wanted to be able to see how actor conceptions of legitimacy played out in terms of how they considered and constructed ideas of legitimacy in order to inform their response to the perceived legitimacy of chargeable support services.

Given the pragmatist focus on practical consequences, my choice of methodological approach was one in which I could very easily become part of the action. I felt that this would allow me to gain access to the more subtle elements of practical consequence in addition to those which were more dominant if I were part of the environment in which actors made choices relating to chargeable services and what they perceived to be legitimate. Being present alongside the actors would also shed light on the social construction of actors'

legitimacy narratives, and how they might use such narratives to guide their responses to the changing institutional environment.

Set against the need for an in depth understanding of how actor narratives played out in practice then, ethnography appeared the strongest methodological approach on offer, allowing my integration within a LIO as part of a team. Van Maanen's (1988) argument that ethnography is "*highly particular and hauntingly personal, yet serves as the basis for grand comparison and understanding within and across a society*" demonstrates why an ethnographic approach would allow me to shed light on actor worldviews of legitimacy in a way that gave me full access to the character and narratives of the actors in question. The approach allows access to intense and personal information from actors which may not be picked up in as much detail using alternative approaches, particularly as much of this detail comes out through the development of personal relationships with the actors themselves. Consequently, this approach offered the fullest picture of how socially constructed narratives present themselves with respect to actor legitimacy considerations, and how these narratives framed actors' responses to the changes in the institutional environment.

In order to better understand the research problem from a pragmatist perspective, I also chose to design the ethnography such that I was part of that action, so that I could see the development of the linkages between actor legitimacy narratives and the ways in which actors used those narratives to develop responses which they perceived as legitimate. My research design therefore involved a practical project whereby I offered support in helping LIOs develop their response to the chargeable support services idea. This allowed me to become part of the process of consideration of moves into chargeable support services, and hence more readily observe elements of behaviour that shaped action, in turn, observing the truths as understood by actors within the LIOs.

Adopting a pragmatist approach also impacted upon the choices I made whilst conducting the ethnography during my time in the field. This particularly impacted in terms of the positioning of questions I asked and in the choices I

made regarding information that I sought. My communication during my time in the field particularly focused on establishing detail regarding the ways in which actors navigated the complexities relating to charging for support services, with my questions focusing on actor how actors perceived charging and the course of action that they felt that their LIO should take. In doing so, my approach to the fieldwork was positioned as accepting moves towards charging and a related chargeable services dilemma for the LIO as a problem which existed independently of the actors, through which they would in turn establish a practical response of their own construction.

Consequently, my lines of questioning and the information which I sought related to such actor responses, and the pragmatic difference that the actors believed their responses would hold. For example, in conversation I typically tried to steer conversations towards understanding why each actor was either in favour of or against charging, and in turn how their beliefs impacted on their actions relating to chargeable services. In doing so, I accepted, in line with a pragmatist approach, a link between actor theory, in terms of the way actors viewed charging, and actor practice, in terms of how they responded and sought to maximise any practical difference. In taking this approach I also accepted, in line with the work of Sayer (1981), that any dilemma relating to charging was indeed an objective reality, in response to which actors would socially construct their response.

#### 4.4 Methodological approach: multi-sited ethnography

The methodological approach is that of a multi-sited ethnography. In section 4.3.3 I elaborated on how the philosophical underpinnings of a pragmatist approach influenced my choice of ethnography as my methodological approach. I go on to detail in section 4.4.1 the ideas surrounding ethnography and multi-sited ethnography in more detail. I address the practical aspects of selecting sites in section 4.4.2, and my access arrangements in section 4.4.3. Finally I discuss briefly my mode of engagement with research participants once on site, in section 4.4.4.

#### *4.4.1 Ethnography and multi-sited ethnography*

As a methodological approach, ethnography offers a number of benefits which, as described by Fine, Morrill and Surianarain (2009) include the following:

1. The elaboration of informal relations;
2. A view of organisations as systems of meaning;
3. Understanding of organisations and their environments;
4. A focus on the drivers of organisational change;
5. An insight into power, politics and control.

The benefits listed above offer a methodological approach which is highly consistent with both the potential complexity of the research problem, and the institutional lens used to examine it with (see Chapter 3), along with a pragmatist philosophy that seeks to understand how the socially constructed truths of individual actors contribute to an independent external reality. Given the complexity of the research problem, in particular with regard to capturing a full range of actor narratives in a shifting institutional environment, it is likely that more simplistic methodological approaches would not allow sufficient depth of examination. Engaging in an ethnographic approach allowed for visibility of the formation and influence of actor narratives within the LIO, with particular respect to the legitimacy of moves into chargeable support services, and how these narratives surrounding legitimacy shape actor choices in respect of their responses to ideas of legitimacy.

Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) argue that an ethnographic methodological approach stands in direct contrast to experimental research designs as may be found under a positivist approach: the suggestion is that instead, the ultimate aim is to become a socially accepted part of a group, in order to understand meanings and significances of behaviours and language. This 'sociocultural' description of ethnography (Wolcott, 1990a) used to enhance the observation of behaviours, language, and meanings, allows for the development and understanding of narratives arising in the "subjective vision" of the actors present (Asad, 1994, p57). For this research study, such an approach was

important as the subtle details in respect of legitimacy narratives may not have been otherwise observable.

One of the strongest arguments in favour of ethnography is the concept of 'holism' (Johnson, 1990): that the ethnographer is able to blend disparate observations in order to establish a holistic construct of culture or society (Strathern, 1992; Thornton, 1988; Johnson and Johnson, 1990; Stewart, 1998). This holistic approach, coupled with ideas of ethnography offering 'breadth' of data (Johnson, 1987; Stewart, 1998), as well as depth, were two of the strengths of ethnography in relation to this research. In reference to the information gathered on site, a number of actors within LIOs did not outwardly say that they had strong opinions on ethnography when asked directly, but the breadth of information available allowed those narratives to come to the fore in other, often more subtle ways.

Many ethnographic studies are conducted with a broad remit to examine culture, processes, or politics within an organisation. My research however, focuses on exploration of a specific issue within the organisation, and as such, it is likely that the ethnographic process may have been subject to a greater degree of data filtering than may normally be the case in an ethnographic study. This poses a risk: Punch (1994) argues that in any ethnographic study, the *"researcher is also the research instrument"*, and as such, the choices of the ethnographer regarding where to focus their attention within the organisation in itself results in data potentially appearing or being presented in different ways. Further, Horner (2004) argues that:

*"Knowledge and experience are approached as "partial" in all senses: neither complete, fixed, disinterested, universal, nor neutral; but, instead, situated, local, interested, material, and historical"*.

As a result, it is virtually impossible to record a full set of data based on everything going on within the organisation at any one time, and Goodwin et al. (2003) argue that it must then be inevitable that the ethnographer *"will have to make conscious decisions: where and who to observe, when and how to record data"*. This leads to an inevitable critique of ethnography: that the study is always a partial picture. For example, Agar (1996, pp38-39) stipulates that:

*“No matter how long the report, no matter how tireless the reader, the data as presented must be partial, more partial than what the ethnographer knows.”*

Despite arguments that ethnography presents only a partial snapshot, many scholars argue that the context sensitivity painted by ethnography rectifies that balance. The idea that the ethnographer is able to elaborate on sets of behaviours (Stewart, 1998) within the context of a range of other observed activities allows for the joining up of narratives that may otherwise be unobservable. With respect to LIOs charging FLOs for support services, this is a particularly notable strength, as the issue is one which is time sensitive. As such, at the time of the fieldwork it was likely that the development of actor legitimacy narratives would be occurring rapidly: a methodological approach with less context sensitivity may not establish the same level of detail with respect to changing narratives.

Given the nature therefore of the research problem as a time-limited problem during which the institutional environment is shifting, and a problem likely to be occurring within a number of organisations at the same time, I sought to use the idea above of context sensitivity in order to join up narratives across and between LIOs. The provision of LIO support has in the past been cited as disparate (HM Treasury, 2002; TSRC, 2009), and as such, I felt that undertaking ethnography within a number of LIOs would allow for the idea of LIOs themselves having different institutional contexts. I therefore chose to undertake a multi-sited ethnography, which took the approach of ‘following the story’ (Marcus, 1995) across and between sites, as well as within them.

Marcus (1995) argues for a number of uses of multi-sited ethnography. He argues that this approach allows the ethnographer to:

- Follow the people;
- Follow the thing (for example, the tracing of the movement of money or goods);
- Follow the metaphor (which involves tracing an idea or concept);
- Follow the story (which involves exploration of narratives across sites);
- Follow the life or biography;

- Follow the conflict.

Multi-sited ethnographies are often used in broad cultural studies, denoted by Marcus (1999) as 'obvious' multi-sited ethnographies, such as following the migration of a people. However, given the similarities of the changing institutional environment within the organisational field, I felt that sourcing a number of LIOs within the organisational population would allow for deeper exploration of the issues at hand.

One of the difficulties inherent in multi-sited ethnography, however, is in constructing a field (Nadai and Maeder, 2005). If the field site is not naturally bounded the ethnographer's choice of sites will inherently influence the outcomes of and the types of narrative arising within the ethnography. However, in respect of my multi-sited approach, there is arguably a reasonable balance in sites, having selected both small and large LIOs; those with a city remit and those with a rural remit, and a balance of LIOs who deliver support on a county-wide basis and those who deliver support on a borough or district-wide basis.

In choosing to adopt a multi-sited ethnography, I also acknowledge that there are a number of key risks involved with conducting ethnographic research. The first major risk relates to the researcher "going native" (Adler and Adler, 1987) and becoming immersed into the participant organisation's culture to such an extent that researching the culture from an outsider standpoint becomes difficult. Secondly, there is a risk of capturing a wide array of cultural information but a lack of problem-specific information; a risk given the specific nature of the research problem. A third risk is the risk of the researcher influencing day to day proceedings of the organisational culture (Watson, 2011), and needing to be reflexive about their role as a result. A linked risk with this problem is that of receiving hostility from members of the organisation, and being perceived as an outsider; as a result potentially returning a lower quality of ethnographic information. Finally, Crabtree (1998) also outlines a problem of interpretation: that the researcher is being used as an instrument to interpreting the signs and signals embedded in the daily organisational culture. I have attempted to counter these on at two levels: the first is that by building in a multi-sited ethnographic approach, the potential for some of the risks to occur

is limited - or indeed if they were to occur they would be time limited by the need to move to other sites. Secondly, I regularly engaged in the writing of a reflective diary, which I often wrote in multiple times per day following critical events, in order to unpick my role in how those events played out.

Despite the potential downsides to ethnography, I adopted this approach in the belief that in relation to actor considerations of, constructions of and responses to ideas of legitimacy, it appeared to offer the richest quality of information to research a problem that is potentially sensitive, complex, and multifaceted. The rich level of information that ethnography offers cannot necessarily be gained by simply asking questions through, for instance an interview or a questionnaire, as it would be difficult to observe the subtleties in the narratives of actors in these ways.

#### *4.4.2 Selection of sites*

In mapping the potential available sites, I took into account site accessibility given the intensive nature of the ethnography: the site had to be accessible based on where I currently live, or where I was able to stay. My initial pool of sites was therefore based on research of the LIOs operating within a broad area surrounding my home along with places I could easily access. However, I excluded all infrastructure organisations within the county I live in, having worked closely with most of these organisations in my prior work history.

I then researched the LIOs in operation in these areas using the internet, and information available from umbrella bodies both regionally and nationally. Having undertaken this search, I identified a pool of 42 potential LIO sites to research.

I wrote to both the CEO and the Chair of Trustees at each of the 42 sites (see the sample letter in Appendix B), inviting them to take part in the study, based on the access arrangements detailed in section 4.4.3.

Of these 42 sites, I received five responses, to which I arranged an initial meeting with the CEO of each to discuss the study in more depth. Based on my initial meetings, I deemed four of the sites suitable for research; the fifth having been through a high number of redundancies, leaving just the CEO and one staff member in place, which would have made an ethnography difficult to undertake. This organisation had also moved towards essentially functioning more as a community development organisation than a LIO.

With the four sites selected, I then offered to meet with the board and discuss the study in depth with board members. Three of the four sites took me up on the offer; the fourth was happy to go ahead without this mechanism in place (with the consent of the Chair of the board in place).

#### *4.4.3 Access arrangements*

In order to gain access to the sites, I offered to undertake a practical project relating to charging for services. This practical project might include areas such as business planning for chargeable services, helping map the demand for chargeable support services, discussing the idea with members, helping to market chargeable support services, or evaluating chargeable support services that were already in place. Undertaking this project allowed me to put an offer to the LIO that ensured my presence would benefit them, but it also allowed a shaping of the available data given that this project would then mean conversations surrounding the research issue of charging FLOs for support services would tend to gravitate towards me during my time with the LIO.

For each of the LIOs in question, I used a pseudonym in order to anonymise each site and the actors within it – I called them Parsley CVS, Sage CVS, Rosemary CVS, and Thyme CVS, and each site is given a detailed overview in Chapter 5. Here, CVS denotes 'Council for Voluntary Service' - arguably the most common type of LIO. The projects at each site were agreed as follows:

- At Parsley CVS, I would look at strengthening the offer of current chargeable support services and map FLO reactions to these services;

- At Sage CVS, I would support early discussions about whether and how to charge;
- At Rosemary CVS, I would also support early discussions about whether and how to charge;
- At Thyme CVS I would help with the development of a chargeable membership package.

My offer to each LIO to undertake a project relating to chargeable support services allowed me to become close to the debates surrounding chargeable support services and the institutional environment. Undertaking a project of this type gave me the ability to ask probing questions of actors across the whole organisation, many of which would not have been possible had I undertaken a more neutral role such as a cleaner or an administrator. However, whilst the project did allow me to ask probing questions, this is likely to only have impacted on the findings of the research in a limited way, as the research aim is to focus on ideas of legitimacy in relation to chargeable services rather than specifically on ideas surrounding whether chargeable support services are deemed 'right' *per se*.

I agreed to spend four days a week in each LIO, working 9-5 or a similar variation depending on the LIO opening hours. I used the fifth day of the week to keep on top of my research diaries and to allow for some reflection on the week. I stayed with each LIO for six weeks, at the end of which I presented a report to the CEO and / or the board based on my practical project, as requested at the time of initial access discussions.

#### *4.4.4 Engagement with research participants*

During my time at each CVS, my research was not covert but rather openly discussed with members of staff and volunteers from the outset. Research participants received an initial overview of my research at the time of sending out research participant information sheets (see Appendix C, and section 4.7 for a more detailed discussion). On my first day at each LIO, I also circulated an

email around staff and volunteers (see Appendix D) explaining my presence and what I was researching. This email, however, also spoke about the practical project I was undertaking for the LIO.

My intention was that the majority of conversations within the LIO would not revolve around my research but rather the practical project. This tended to be the case, although I sometimes referred to my research when explaining the presence of a recording device during interviews.

There was however, a difficulty that came with presenting myself as a researcher rather than just a project volunteer, and this was that often members of staff or volunteers came to view me as an expert on the subject of charging, and came to me to ask my opinion or my experience on the issue, when trying to make decisions. In this instance, I tried to keep my own opinions neutral and attempted to reflect back the types of dialogues that had already been presented to me internally, such that my narrative matched the narrative(s) of the person or people seeking my opinion. I did this on the basis that if my opinions and language reflected theirs, I would appear - and potentially become - more strongly integrated within the trust circle of the person or people speaking to me, and in doing so I aimed to build trust and confidence amongst the staff by becoming 'one of the crowd'.

#### 4.5 Data collection methods

During my time spent at each site, I used a range of data collection methods, including research diaries, photographs, recordings of meetings, recordings of unstructured interviews, document collection and analysis, reflexive notes on my role in day to day situations, and sketches of building layouts.

Of these methods, the tools I used the most frequently and readily were research diaries based on participant observation, and transcripts of unstructured interviews and of meetings.

With reference to my days being spent as a participant observer, Gold (1958) and Junker and Hughes (1960) argue for a typology of four participant observer roles: complete observer; observer as participant; participant as observer; and complete participant. Of these four roles, given the nature of my overt discussions surrounding my research as detailed in section 4.4.4, my role veered towards observer as participant – my research aims were clear to all throughout and although I was often seen as an insider, I was still frequently asked about my work outside of my current project within the LIO and about my research in general. My presence as an observer was noted more in some LIOs than in others: the following extract from my notes at Sage CVS elaborates on this.

*“I was asked today by Joanna whether I was the secret millionaire [Channel 4, 2006-12]. Fred and Roberta joined in, laughing about me coming to find out more about the organisation and at the end I’d give them a cheque. I insisted this wasn’t the case and that they were going to be very disappointed if they thought as much! Joanna said to me ‘well, it makes me wonder how you manage to get here, pay your bills, work here for six weeks without having an implications for your family, just for the pleasure of going around finding out about us... you must be [the secret millionaire]!’”.*

Researcher diaries, Sage CVS

This extract shows that despite becoming a part of the culture at Sage CVS to the point that staff and volunteers trusted and liked me enough to share their stories and perspective with me, I was still seen as an outsider at times.

The majority of my days were spent working on the practical project, during which time I also conducted many informal conversations about charging which were recorded in my research diaries. I recorded two types of research diary each day: the first which was based on my participant observations, and the second was designed to be more reflexive, examining my own role and influence in developing narratives and in day to day situations.

Approximately once every other day, in addition to my workload for the agreed project for the trustees, I conducted a one to one interview with each of the staff members that were in some way involved with issues linked to chargeable services. The interviews were valuable as staff members sometimes shared with me thoughts that they felt unable to share in a group environment. Each of these interviews was conducted using the practical project as a reason for holding them – my perspective was that I wanted to understand the situation as it was now in order to fully inform my report to the board and to understand the implications of anything new that my report might suggest. As such, unstructured interviews felt the most appropriate device in order to keep the conversation relevant to the person being interviewed, and to ensure that the interview felt natural as part of the practical project as opposed to something purely for the research study which would have the implication of feeling more formal and potentially changing the setting with the participant. However, I did record each interview with a personal recording device, which participants seemed to forget about within a minute or so of each interview.

I also used a recording device to record meetings I was present in where ever possible – this allowed for an in depth examination of the meeting once it was over, as it would have been difficult to follow the multiple narratives of different actors during a meeting, whilst still maintaining a natural and engaged presence rather than frantically scribbling notes and hence risking appearing as an outsider.

With regards to documentary analysis, I kept a copy of all key documents that I perceived to be related to charging, but across all four sites, documents did not prove to be a central part of considerations or narratives with respect to the research problem at any stage of discussions. There were very few staff, volunteers or board members who referred to specific documents when discussing the research problem. As a result, although I have kept a copy of key documents and used them in my analysis, I have tried to view my analysis of documents with a lower significance in the analysis process, as documentary evidence did not reflect heavily what was happening in the field.

In order to provide an overview of the breadth of data collected, I have detailed the volumes and types of data collected on the next page in Table 4A.

**Table 4A: A summary of data collected**

| <b>Type of data</b>                                  | <b>Parsley CVS</b>   | <b>Sage CVS</b>  | <b>Rosemary CVS</b>   | <b>Thyme CVS</b>  |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Unstructured interviews</b>                       | 4 board members<br><br>7 staff members<br><br>153 pages of transcript  | 5 board members<br><br>8 staff members<br><br>176 pages of transcript  | 4 board members<br><br>6 staff members<br><br>128 pages of transcript   | 2 board members<br><br>13 staff members<br><br>201 pages of transcript  |
| <b>Meetings which I observed and recorded</b>        | 2 board meetings<br><br>2 staff meetings in relation to approach to chargeable support and funding<br><br>1 meeting in the community<br><br>94 pages of transcript | 2 board meetings<br><br>1 staff away day (informal part recorded through research diaries; formal meeting section recorded by transcript)<br><br>2 meetings in the community of local partnerships<br><br>69 pages of transcript | 2 board meetings<br><br>2 staff meetings<br><br>1 staff 'brainstorming session' in relation to charging<br><br>71 pages of transcript | 0 board meetings<br><br>1 staff away day (informal part recorded through research diaries; formal meeting section recorded by transcript)<br><br>31 pages of transcript |
| <b>Meetings which I convened to discuss charging</b> | 0  | 3 meetings:<br>1 with senior managers<br>1 with development team<br>1 with both<br><br>84 pages of transcript  | 3 meetings:<br>1 with staff<br>2 with staff and board members<br><br>68 pages of transcript   | 1 staff meeting with managers and development team together<br><br>32 pages of transcript   |

|  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Research diary entries</b>                            | 37<br>185 pages   | 28<br>145 pages   | 24<br>156 pages   | 24<br>92 pages  |
| <b>Total pages of research diary and transcript data</b> | 432 pages   | 474 pages   | 423 pages   | 356 pages   |
| <b>Copies of documents</b>                               | 9 strategic documents<br>2 surveys<br>12 emails<br>3 funding bids<br>2 leaflets advertising chargeable services | 5 strategic documents<br>3 copies of minutes from previous relevant board meetings<br>1 copy of tiered membership offer<br>18 previous emails relating to setting up of trading subsidiary                      | 1 copy of notes from a previous chargeable services brainstorming session<br>3 strategic documents<br>1 copy of leaflet advertising chargeable services | 5 strategic documents<br>1 copy of document outlining services offered to 'members'<br>7 emails |
| <b>Photographs</b>                                       | 10 photographs of office layout   | 21 photographs of office layout<br>35 photographs from away day and in particular of flip chart information from away day<br>21 photographs of whiteboard information from internal chargeable service planning | 6 photographs of office layout<br>12 photographs of whiteboard and flipchart material from chargeable services planning sessions                        | 16 photographs of office layout<br>15 photographs from away day                                 |

In the next section I will discuss my approach to data analysis.

#### 4.6 Data analysis and management

The following section seeks to highlight the use of my data once I had gathered it. Given the length and breadth of the ethnography, managing the data was itself a critical process, with 1685 pages of raw data excluding photographs and copies of documents taken from the site. In reference to my chosen analytical approach of template analysis, it should be noted that in this section I only discuss my overarching choice of template analysis as an approach: discussion of the process of template development and the analysis itself occurs in Chapter 6 alongside the discussion. The first sub-section here therefore refers to my use of template analysis, whilst the second section addresses my management of the data through the use of NVivo 10.

##### *4.6.1 Template analysis approach to data analysis*

Template analysis (Kent, 2000; King et al., 2003) is a relatively new research analysis technique, gaining popularity over the last ten to fifteen years. The tool shares a number of characteristics with grounded theory in terms the gradual refinement of a theory, but deviates from grounded theory in allowing key themes to be brought to the data a priori. King (2004, p57), one of the key scholars in the field of template analysis, defines the analysis technique as such:

*“The term ‘template analysis’ does not describe a single, delineated method; it refers rather to a varied but related group of techniques for thematically organising and analysing textual data. Some of these themes will usually be defined a priori, but they will be modified and added to as the researcher reads and interprets the texts. The template is organised in a way which represents the relationships between*

*themes, as defined by the researcher, most commonly involving a hierarchical structure.”*

King goes on to outline the process involved in template analysis, whereby the researcher brings together a series of codes, which correspond to themes arising from the information gathered on site. These themes can either be brought to the template a priori, or arise inductively from the data, both themes from both sources will be modified and amended throughout the analysis process; some themes may be dropped from the data altogether. Such flexibility afforded by template analysis have seen its' applications to a wide range of research fields including psychology (Brooks and King, 2012); health (Gollop et al., 2004); management (McDowall and Saunders, 2010); and childcare (Stratton et al., 2006).

Template analysis offers a number of distinct advantages: firstly, it is not so prescriptive as Strauss and Corbin's (1990) grounded theory technique, in that it does not follow a set of defined process. Secondly, template analysis allows for flexibility across cases (King, 2012) – meaning that cases can easily be compared and emergent themes grouped together rather than having to first go into each case in depth. Finally, the use of template analysis allows codes to develop and be disbanded as the template develops.

As applied to this piece of research, the major appeal of template analysis was the ability to bring a priori themes whilst still taking a largely inductive approach to examination of the data. More specifically, if I were to arrive at a LIO and undertake a broad ranging ethnography, I may not have understood anything more about chargeable support services than when I arrived, as ethnographies are dependent upon the day to day experiences of the organisation and the researcher within it. However, having undertaken some exploratory interviews there were a number of themes I specifically wanted to explore within each LIO that may not have arisen in conversation naturally, which gave me a starting point for my analytical process. For example, given that throughout my interviews I had already established that awareness surrounding the public benefit requirement was low, it was highly likely that this may not have arisen within the natural course of the ethnography had I not asked about it.

Therefore, I sought an analysis structure that both acknowledged and allowed for the idea that I was bringing themes to the analysis in addition to exploring previously unseen themes through allowing the data to speak to me.

In undertaking a template analysis, I was also able to deal effectively with the vast swathes of information gathered on site, by using themes and codes to condense the data down to a more manageable level. I initially undertook a template analysis using just a small segment of the data from Parsley CVS, and from there developed a template which I applied to a wider segment of the data. I went through nine revisions to my template before using the template itself to frame my theoretical contribution presented in Chapter 7.

The process undertaken within my template analysis will be discussed in Chapter 6 alongside my discussion.

#### *4.6.2 Data Management using NVivo*

To manage the data, given the vast quantity of information gathered on site, I used NVivo10, which I learned by undertaking a short training course accompanied by Bazeley and Richards (2000) practical guide to the tool.

The benefits of using NVivo to manage my data included:

- The ability to easily co-ordinate my data analysis from a range of different media sources including websites, photographs, emails, and documents containing my transcripts and research files;
- The use of memos and text notes to quickly flag points for revisiting later on;
- The use of nodes, classifications and relationships to establish patterns across the data, and to quickly and easily categorise those patterns;
- The ability to trace a particular phrase or a person across a series of separate sources;
- The ability to re-run any new analysis relatively quickly.

However, there were some areas where the programme was not necessarily suited to my own philosophical approach: for instance, it was tempting to look at quantitative data around how frequently a phrase appeared, for instance, and try to read meaning in to that when in line with my philosophical approach, frequency of a phrase or a word would not necessarily add value to its meaning.

## 4.7 Ethics

This section will review the ethical issues inherent in the study and how I attempt to combat them. An overview of the ethical issues involved is given in 4.7.1, followed by a discussion of the processes followed relating to participant consent in section 4.7.2, and the processes followed relating to anonymity in 4.7.3.

### *4.7.1 Ethical issues*

The primary ethical problems arising with an ethnography of this nature are the issues of consent, anonymity and confidentiality. Ethically, ethnography presents a risk that is associated with confidentiality and anonymity: participants must be made to feel comfortable in their discussions with the researcher, and whilst the researcher can make names and identities anonymous, there is no assurance of confidentiality, which can particularly be a problem if the researcher is entering an environment that is politically sensitive (Hammersley, 2006). Indeed, Goodwin et al (2003) detail an example of this situation that occurred a number of times during my time in the field: that in which I observe a conversation, or an action, that was not directed towards me and that the research participant was not aware I could see, or hear. Despite the research participant's consent to be part of the study, a practical erosion of the boundaries between researcher and participant over time meant that often actors within the LIO would sometimes forget my role as a researcher while conducting their day to day business. Whilst often this allowed for the type of natural study that ethnography seeks, it also meant that the line surrounding

consent was much more blurred than in other types of methodological approach.

I aimed to combat this through a number of approaches. Firstly, I ensured that my role as a researcher was permanently clear by framing discussions with reference to my research. Secondly, I issued details on the participant research information sheets (see Appendix C) that made clear I would be observing behaviour within the LIO, and reinforced this with an email explaining my presence on my first day. Finally, I often used my reflexive diaries in which to make decisions about what to include and what not to, based on judgements surrounding my role in a situation – I erred on the side of not including information where I felt the participant may see as a violation of their confidence and trust. Beyond this, where I felt it appropriate I asked participants if they gave their permission for me to log stories they shared with me – although this was not always possible depending on the situation. At the end of my time with each LIO, I reminded participants that they could still opt out at any time, and that they would be welcome to see a copy of my research if they wished.

#### *4.7.2 Consent*

In asking participants to sign up to the study, I took a dual approach with respect to consent. Firstly, I sought the consent of the CEO and the Chair of Trustees for the LIO as a whole to be part of the study (see approach letters in Appendices C and D). Once this had occurred, I sent out a research participation information sheet (Appendix C), describing the research for participants and asking them to opt out if they wished. Consent was therefore presumed unless a participant opted out, but I made clear upon leaving each LIO that participants could still opt out at any time and that they were welcome to see a copy of my research if they chose to.

#### *4.7.3 Anonymity*

With respect to anonymity, all names, places and identifying features were anonymised at the source. This meant in practice that names and place

references did not appear in any of my documents, including my research diaries.

#### 4.8 Summary

This methodology chapter has considered the research approach as a multi-sited ethnography, coming from a pragmatist philosophical perspective, which looks at truth as being something which is able to provide practically useful rules which frame action. Such a pragmatist approach impacts on the resulting knowledge formation both through the framing of the problem in examining both actor considerations of and more critically in this respect, responses to, legitimacy and further through the inherent consideration of legitimacy as a tool to guide useful action. This pragmatist approach also comes out later in the study through Chapters 6 and 7, whereby actors legitimacy worldviews are discussed in relation to the ways they use these worldviews to frame and progress action.

Ethnography and multi-sited ethnography were both discussed, whereby I established that rationale for a multi-sited ethnography as 'following the story' to trace narratives between and across LIOs as well as within them.

I then discussed my site selection arrangements and my access arrangements, before discussing the data collection methods I used on site. These included research diaries, recordings of unstructured interviews, document collection, photographs, and reflections on my own role.

In section 4.6 I discussed my analytical approach, including my use of template analysis and the data management tool, NVivo.

Finally, in section 4.7 I considered the ethical issues inherent in the study and how I attempted to combat them.

## Chapter 5

### The four LIO ethnographies: an introduction to the sites

#### 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to give an introduction to the organisational context relating to each individual site, against which the discussion that follows in Chapter 6 and the theoretical contribution presented in Chapter 7 can be situated.

The contextual information presented in this chapter is not intended to form part of the discussion and analysis per se. Rather, my aim here is simply to give an overview of the background information relating to each site and the context surrounding their operation, including details on their staffing arrangements, their financial positions, and the challenges that each LIO was facing at the time of my research fieldwork. In establishing a contextual grounding for each site, I aim to add clarity to assertions that I will make in later chapters relating to the ways in which actors facing institutional change view said change as legitimate - or illegitimate - depending upon their particular worldview of legitimacy, and how they seek to influence the institutional narrative in such a situation.

I will also use this chapter to highlight my own role within each LIO, with a particular focus on the project I was working on whilst present at each site (which was also given some attention in section 4.4), and to comment upon the reaction of actors at each site to my presence in the field. By noting here the character and consequences of my own role with each LIO, such considerations will only play a more minor role in the data analysis chapters to follow, allowing analysis of the ethnographic data to be given full attention.

It is my intention that as a result of the background information presented in this chapter, Chapters 6 and 7 will benefit from a clear presentation of narratives present in the ethnographic data, in the knowledge that the reader is already aware of the context against which to understand these narratives.

The first section of this chapter – section 5.2 – presents a factual overview of the sites in simplistic terms, addressing concepts such as levels of funding, number of staff employed, and board size. Beyond this, sub-sections 5.3 through to 5.6 present ethnographic information about each individual site, before section 5.7 offers a short chapter summary.

## 5.2 Site summary data

I visited each site for a six week period, during which I worked 30 hours per week alongside staff, volunteers, and trustees. Table 5A set out below presents an overview of some of the key contextual information for each site gathered during that time: it addresses each LIO's funding situation; the numbers of staff and volunteers involved with the organisation, and the organisational structure and purpose. On funding, the table shows the level of income for each LIO, the funding situation at the time of my visit, and the primary funding model(s) under investigation by the LIO in respect of chargeable support services. There is also a reference here as to the use of subsidiary trading companies by LIOs that were using them, or were considering using them. The second row of the table provides a broad overview of staffing, board and volunteering arrangements, including the number of staff employed, the typical employment arrangements of staff, and the make-up of the board - all of whom are volunteer trustees as LIOs are registered charities. Finally, the 'composition and purpose' section of the table deals with the activities of each of the sites and their membership situation.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, it is worth noting again here that all data in relation to sites has been anonymised at source, and as such, information in the table below is sometimes approximated in order to preserve the anonymity of the LIOs and actors involved in the study.

| <b>TABLE 5A</b>                    | <b>Parsley CVS</b>   | <b>Sage CVS</b>  |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>FUNDING</b>                     |  |  |
| <b>Approx. annual income</b>       | £350,000   | £500,000   |
| <b>Funding situation</b>           | Recent loss of large BASIS* grant resulting in multiple redundancies. Funding from local council intact but worries from senior staff that it may be withdrawn in the near future. Low percentage income from local government so not that dependent on statutory sources of funding; however, Parsley CVS were highly dependent on Big Lottery Fund income. Limited reserves of £35,000, most of which would be accounted for in redundancy payouts if Parsley CVS were to close. | Reserves of approx. £420,000. Recent loss of BASIS* funding resulted in some restructuring and one redundancy. No immediate threat to income from statutory sources, and local council in particular give a generous settlement of approx. £280,000. Senior staff have concern about longer term threat of cuts from both county and local councils however, well as concern about short term threat of funding withdrawal from the newly established clinical commissioning group.                      |
| <b>Preferred new funding model</b> | Basic membership fee of £30 or £50 per year depending on which services a FLO wanted access to. This would entitle the FLO to regular newsletters, an hour of free advice, and various other low level signposting services. An hourly consultancy rate would be chargeable beyond this.   | Twin track approach whereby priority** FLOs are given unlimited free access to all services whilst non-priority FLOs pay an annual fee topped up by purchasing 'packages of support'. Packages of support would include a set number of hours of services with a similar theme - for instance a 'funding package' might include 3 places on a bid writing course, 10 hours of one to one advice with a funding advisor, 10 funding bids read and critiqued and a funding search for appropriate funders. |
| <b>Use of trading subsidiaries</b> | None in use or under consideration   | Establishing a trading subsidiary to generate non-primary purpose income. Had previously owned a successful trading subsidiary that came to a close in 2004 following the market becoming more competitive and it no longer being considered worthwhile to trade by senior staff.  |
| <b>STAFFING AND VOLUNTEERS</b>     |  |  |

|                                      |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Staff employed</b>                | 9, mostly part time   | 22, even mix of full time and part time   |
| <b>Volunteers (exc. trustees)</b>    | 0   | Approx. 80  |
| <b>Board size</b>                    | 20  | 12  |
| <b>Board make up</b>                 | All board members are sourced from member FLOs.   | Mix of voluntary sector professionals, private sector professionals, representatives of local FLOs, and local individuals. Almost all board members active in community elsewhere in some way.  |
| <b>Area</b>                          | A single market town and limited surrounding rural area.  | Four small towns and some limited rural area in between them.   |
| <b>COMPOSITION AND PURPOSE</b>       |   |   |
| <b>Activities overview</b>           | Advice and representation services for FLOs, limited project work.  | Advice and representation for FLOs; numerous direct services.   |
| <b>Specific activities</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding advice</li> <li>• Development advice</li> <li>• Trading advice / starting a social enterprise</li> <li>• Provision of policies and procedures</li> <li>• Contracting and tendering advice</li> <li>• Occasional attendance at public sector meetings</li> <li>• Social return on investment consultancy services</li> <li>• Limited project work, mainly focused on a race equality project</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding advice</li> <li>• Development advice</li> <li>• Legal structures advice</li> <li>• Provision of policies and procedures</li> <li>• Building partnerships between FLOs</li> <li>• Setting up new FLOs</li> <li>• Extensive direct services including disability services, food bank, luncheon clubs and community transport schemes</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Representation</li> <li>• Partnership work with local authorities</li> </ul> |
| <b>Approximate no. number of FLO</b> | 200 prior to commencing membership charging scheme  | 120   |

\*BASIS is the Big Lottery Fund's Building and Sustaining Infrastructure Services Programme, elaborated on in Chapter 4.

\*\*Priority groups would be set not just according to income but according to gaps in the local voluntary sector - for example, where services are not provided for locally.

### 5.3 Parsley CVS

Parsley CVS was a relatively small site, both in income terms and in staffing terms. The CVS catered predominantly for a small market town, and the office building itself was located slightly outside of the town centre, meaning that the number of visitors arriving at the office unannounced were very few, although the occasional planned meeting took place. My interpretation of Parsley CVS' position, as I noted in my research diaries at the time, was that the small size and the physical distance from the FLOs they sought to represent resulted in Parsley CVS feeling at arms' length from the FLOs operating in the town, often acting independently of them rather than alongside them.

In terms of staffing structure, the organisation had a relatively flat structure. All staff reported directly to Doreen, the Chief Executive, other than a single project worker, Kate, who reported to Vishal – a senior manager who also appeared to be informally acknowledged by all staff as Doreen's deputy. Another key member of staff, Teresa, had no formal management role but informally appeared to take a key role in the direction and decision making of Parsley CVS – acting as Doreen's key confidant, and holding an informal but apparently critical liaison role between Doreen and other staff. Beyond this core triangle of senior figures (Doreen and Vishal taking formal senior roles; Teresa taking on no formal senior management role but appearing to be treated by staff with the same respect and consideration afforded to her as Doreen and Vishal), all other staff were treated on the same level in terms of participation in decision making. These staff included:

- Steve, an administrator;
- Neil, an IT support worker;
- Alice, a project worker;
- Christopher, a funding advice officer;
- Elaine, another funding advice officer;
- Karl, the marketing manager.

*and have an input into issues but not to have to go from the very base point, she does that for us and then we take a decision based on her advice.”*

Stuart, Board Member, Parsley CVS

My own observations at the time were that Parsley CVS as an institution had evolved over time with Doreen's vision and values at the centre of it: she had worked for Parsley CVS for almost 25 years and had evolved alongside the organisation. I also observed from her a strongly authoritarian management style that allowed little room for staff or board members questioning decisions or direction. This was exemplified in actions such as regularly shouting at staff, and shutting down discussions where staff questioned her viewpoint. This often led to tensions between actors who disagreed with Doreen's vision - those tensions went on to balloon beyond proportion on a number of occasions.

Prior to setting up the placement at Parsley CVS, I held an initial meeting with Doreen and Teresa. It was clear to me at that meeting that Doreen in particular considered Parsley CVS to be in a very difficult funding position and that they needed funds urgently as a result of the end of their BASIS contract with the Big Lottery Fund, and further, the imminent end of BASIS2 funding. Collectively, these two funding streams had accounted for over 60% of Parsley CVS' annual income. Upon the commencement of my research with Parsley CVS, this severe financial situation was already playing out in the form of a voluntary redundancy programme. Doreen was strongly and vocally against charging for services but the severity of the funding situation was such that she felt she was left with no choice.

At the initial arrangements meeting, Doreen and Teresa also discussed their charging arrangements – which had already commenced at a very early stage at the time of my initial meeting. These are perhaps best summed up in the following extract from my research diaries:

*“Both Doreen and Teresa then took the opportunity to discuss their current support services in detail: their current chargeable support services are a funding advice service and a commissioning advice service (both of which have only recently become chargeable services), but they also offer free ‘groups advice’, which appears to largely cover development work such as constitutions, legal structures, and board development.*

*“However, they discussed that they try to charge for much of this as part of the funding advice or contracts advice chargeable support. For instance a business plan needed for funding bids might be “lumped into” the funding advice service and charged for as opposed to treated under the groups advice service for free. I got the impression during this part of the conversation that the organisation has no real sense of a boundary between what is charged for and what isn’t charged for.”*

Author's research diary

The majority of chargeable support services being carried out through Parsley CVS were reactive to ongoing developments rather than in the form of proactively planned programmes. This appeared to be primarily as a result of charging having arisen from the need to take urgent action to secure funds, without having the luxury of time to implement a strategic planning process for chargeable services.

My internal role with Parsley CVS stemmed from a project collectively negotiated between Doreen, Teresa and myself. Initially they had asked me to investigate the scope for extending chargeable services to small and medium sized businesses who wished to access public sector tendering, but my sense was this would not allow me to engage easily with internal debates surrounding charging for support services to FLOs. Following some discussion, it was agreed that I would undertake a critical examination of the current reach of chargeable services, and report back to the board on the strengths and weaknesses of the charging programme, and opportunities for expansion in the future. This allowed me to be much closer to the centre of

chargeable services debates, and in particular, allowed me a natural centre for conversation on the issue with individual actors.

Following my arrangements meeting discussed above, my initial arrival with the CVS was at a time when Doreen was recovering from a serious illness and was hence on long term sick leave. This provided an interesting dynamic, as it meant that staff were going through the change towards chargeable support services without their established leader being there to oversee the transition. Doreen did not return from sick leave until week four of my placement at the site, by which point a number of decisions surrounding chargeable support and funding had been made in her absence. Many of these were decisions that Doreen did not agree with, such as pursuing an opt out for small FLOs that could not afford to pay. This prompted an angry reaction by Doreen, directed at two members of staff in particular – Elaine and Karl - both of whom had been involved in the pursuit of this opt out. As a result of a number of extremely heated exchanges over a few days, Karl decided to resign from his job in a move that was a clear shock to all in the office. A further group meeting saw heated exchanges between Doreen and Elaine, which saw Elaine leave the meeting in tears and prompted Doreen to return to sick leave, signed off with stress. Amidst this conflict, Christopher decided to take voluntary redundancy, as he did not agree with the principle of charging for services and preferred therefore not to be involved with it. (At the time of Christopher's decision, Parsley CVS was already going through a period of offering staff voluntary redundancy, as detailed earlier in this section.)

Particularly during Doreen's absence, it was apparent to me that there were high levels of discomfort and conflict surrounding the idea of moves into chargeable support services. There appeared to be two overarching narratives forming within the staff team. One group appeared to define what a legitimate path of action with respect to chargeable services would be based on shared internal institutional norms, a notion of 'this is the way we've always done it'. This group held a strong respect for Doreen's authority, and although Doreen was pursuing charging out of necessity, she

continued to be vocally very much against charging, and this group appeared to reflect her position. The other group appeared to favour innovation and change in their narratives, and were hence much more critical of current performance. This latter group spent a lot of time trying to carve a new path for the organisation based on an entrepreneurial approach, and used Doreen's absence as an opportunity to make change.

It is likely that the clash of these two core narratives would have caused tensions anyway, but my own role may well have played a part in bringing these tensions to the fore more quickly, by asking overt questions and bringing the debate directly into the minds of staff members. However, despite my suggestion of this, it was often rebuffed, for instance with Christopher telling me that *"we all just feel really strongly about this – we don't always agree, it divides us, but we all have strong feelings"*.

As mentioned above, Christopher took voluntary redundancy during the time I was placed with Parsley CVS. Further proposals were on the table for Doreen's voluntary redundancy and possible redundancy of up to five more staff beyond that – although these would be further down the line. I perceived it inevitable that against this backdrop, some level of tension and high emotions would arise.

#### 5.4 Sage CVS

My time spent with Sage CVS proved a major contrast to my experiences at Parsley CVS. Firstly, Sage CVS was a much larger organisation, with 22 staff and approximately 80 volunteers. Compared to Parsley CVS where there were very few visitors from the community dropping into the office, Sage CVS was a hub of activity, with community members and FLO members popping in and out of the building all day. This was particularly demonstrated by the town in which Sage was situated having many signposts up across the town centre, directing residents to Sage CVS as a

place of interest along with signs to the local train station, bus station and so on.

For Sage CVS, the community it represented was a series of small market towns along with the rural environment surrounding them. Although their building was based in the largest of these four towns, the four towns shared a close proximity and it appeared local residents from other towns would happily travel to visit Sage CVS.

Part of the shift in atmosphere could arguably be due to the increased level of project work from that being undertaken at Parsley CVS: Sage CVS ran a range of community projects including a food bank, a fruit and vegetable box project, and a community transport scheme. Sage CVS had a much more 'hands on' approach to development work, becoming involved in the setting up of FLOs where it was identified that there was a gap in the community. As such, many volunteers of these groups would come in and out of the building, using it as their own until they became established.

Sage CVS' annual budget was in the region of £500,000 per year upon my arrival, although this had been recently cut back from levels which in the past had been as high as £680,000. Consequently, Sage CVS had recently made a senior manager redundant prior to my arrival, but were using a strong pot of reserves in the region of £420,000 to help keep the organisation afloat. The majority of their funding came from local authorities, both at district and county level – and also through the NHS which awarded in the region of £100,000 annual to fund some community development work, alongside a mental health project. The funding that had been lost had primarily been funding from the Big Lottery Fund through the BASIS and BASIS2 streams.

In terms of staffing, the organisation was headed up by Kelly, the CEO, who had worked for Sage CVS for fourteen years. Below Kelly were a team of senior managers: Roberta, heading up the community development team; Barbara, the finance manager; Ellie, the office manager; Donna, the volunteer centre manager; Bill, the business development manager, and

Diane, the training manager. Most of these had a small team of people operating beneath them, but in particular my contact was with the community development team, who were the officers responsible for delivering any services that might become chargeable. Those officers were:

- Fred – a funding officer;
- Joanna – a development officer;
- Debbie – a development officer.

In addition to the staffing structure, it is worth noting at this point the legal structure of Sage CVS. Whilst the majority of Sage CVS was a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, Sage CVS had also set up a trading subsidiary – which will be referred to here as Sage Enterprises – in order to pursue income generation outside of the primary aims of Sage CVS. Bill, the business development manager, was employed to manage the activities of Sage Enterprises, and to generate income through the trading subsidiary.

Sage CVS had already used a trading subsidiary for some years in the early 2000s, but it ceased to trade once income to the sector began to dry up. Bill's post was funded through the Big Lottery Fund's 'Transforming Local Infrastructure' funding stream, and would last for a year, during which Bill would attempt to resurrect the trading subsidiary. The type of work this was directed at was largely supporting increases in health contracting, through activities such as bringing together partnerships to collectively bid for tenders, and bid management. Interestingly, this trading subsidiary was due to become a company limited by shares, where shares would be offered to potential community sector investors such as funders - this is interesting as this arrangement would fall outside the scope of charity trading law, although this issue falls outside the scope of this study.

Bill's work on the trading subsidiary ran parallel to and independent of the agreed scope of my project, which was to look at whether it would be possible to charge for support services further down the line. Sage CVS

were not charging at the time of my arrival and Kelly expressed a desire “*not to alienate groups*” [FLOs] in undertaking any transition towards charging. Her initial comments were that:

*“Well honestly, we’d love to start looking at charging for some more of our services, and behind closed doors some of us – people like myself and some of the senior management team – have been having that conversation for a while now. But the difficulty is twofold. Well no, threefold actually. One: are staff ready for it? And I think they probably aren’t, I think it’ll be quite an uncomfortable culture shock. Two: will our local partners such as the council, well, we have a few SLAs in place, will they support us in any moves to charge for services? And three, what will groups think? Will we push them away? Because if we do we’re defeating what is one of our main aims here as an organisation. However, saying that, I think it’s probably a need that will come further down the line as I don’t think the council funding will continue in its current state forever, so we need to get ahead of the game.”*

Kelly, CEO, Sage CVS

My role with Sage CVS was therefore to examine the feasibility of any moves into charging, and to start having initial discussions with staff and external stakeholders within in the institutional environment. Whilst my role as an ‘inquisitor’ often felt wrapped up with some of the conflicts arising in Parsley CVS, by contrast my role at Sage CVS felt very different: often I was the only one interested in the charging for support services issue, and would feel I was labouring the point when staff just wanted to get on with their day to day work commitments. However, my presence within Sage CVS was largely accepted, and senior managers had a strong buy in to my project – it was once the project was presented to front line staff that the enthusiasm for the project was lost. Occasionally this was out of resistance towards the subject matter but often it was related to indifference – staff hadn’t thought much about the issues I was asking them about, because they hadn’t had to yet. It often felt that I was driving the issue much more than I was at Parsley CVS – for instance, I would call staff together for group discussions on charging for

services – alongside senior managers, and whilst they would come, many of those conversations would not have happened naturally if I had not called such meetings.

My role was not particularly treated with suspicion – there was a widespread acceptance of my presence and all staff treated me with a friendly and welcoming tone. However, perhaps due to the ‘community hub’ nature of the building with people constantly coming in and out, coupled with it being somewhat of a ‘rabbit warren’ of small offices, staff were also much more willing to leave me to my own work and carry on with theirs than was ever the case at Parsley CVS. Put simply, the majority of staff, whilst amicable, were not interested in having any input into whether Sage CVS should charge for services or not.

The atmosphere within the organisation was very much one of collectively making decisions and valuing the contributions of individuals, and an inclusive and welcoming environment was present throughout. This was exemplified often throughout my time with Sage CVS: in having a staff and volunteers’ planning day; in having at least three Christmas parties to recognise staff and volunteer contributions; and in my being invited to join the staff choir. This informal and inclusive attitude was apparent elsewhere too – demonstrated in things like receiving a small Christmas gift from the CEO despite my only having been volunteering for three weeks prior; and being asked by the volunteer running the fruit and vegetable box project if I ever wanted any vegetables putting aside. This organisation's ethos of collaboration would be a core principle that drove some of the key actor worldviews surrounding chargeable support services and whether or not this direction was a legitimate one to take. Impacts on staff; volunteers, FLOs, and on what many of the senior managers referred to as ‘partners’ – whilst in practice meaning local government bodies - were all considered.

It is perhaps not surprising then that internal perceptions of the institutional environment were not fixed, such that many staff suggested that an external dialogue to understand and influence on chargeable services was feasible.

This was put into practice to some extent by Kelly, the CEO, asking me to hold meetings with the local and county councils to discuss how they felt about chargeable support services, which I proceeded to do.

In addition to the collaborative narrative towards change illustrated by Kelly and some other senior members of staff, there were also a number of other narratives which appeared to be present, albeit in small numbers of the staff team. Fred, the funding advisor, was for instance very much resistant to any type of change at all and argued vehemently against it at any given opportunity, often using morality as the basis to illustrate his point. At the other end of the spectrum, there were a handful of people including Barbara, the finance manager, who felt that moving towards chargeable support services was necessary at all costs, in order to ensure the survival of the organisation. Both Fred and Barbara's perspectives will be developed further in Chapter 6.

### 5.5 Rosemary CVS

Rosemary CVS was a much smaller organisation than Sage CVS: more akin to Parsley CVS in terms of staffing levels and income level – with eight part time staff and funding in the region of £200,000. Along with this, Rosemary CVS, like Parsley CVS, did not use any volunteers.

Although Rosemary CVS had a lower level of annual income than Parsley CVS, their financial situation did not appear to be as urgent in terms of replacing their income. Like Parsley CVS and Sage CVS, Rosemary CVS had suffered a large loss from the end of their BASIS and BASIS2 grants, and as a result there had been a recent restructure upon my arrival. However, no single member of staff had lost their job – rather, the majority of staff including Oliver, the CEO, had gone from working full time to working part time. The severity of the situation faced by Rosemary CVS was eased somewhat by the fact that previously, Rosemary CVS owned a building that was paid for in part by European Regional Development funding in the late

1990s. This building had been sold in the year prior to my arrival, to bolster Rosemary CVS' reserves funding. They had then moved offices to much smaller and less modern rented premises in the same town. This had, in the words of Oliver, *"given us some breathing space, but almost served to a negative effect in some ways, in that we have taken it a bit too easy since then and we should have spent the whole time preparing for how we would generate income when those reserves started dwindling"*.

Rosemary CVS had previously set up and run an IT company as a trading subsidiary in order to generate income, providing low cost IT services for the voluntary and community sector. This had been highly successful at the initial time of being established, but the company had ceased trading approximately eighteen months prior to my arrival, following a boom in IT companies with similar aims also providing low cost services.

Both the sale of the building and the running of the IT company were representative of the approach of many – but not all - board and staff members: there was a strong trend towards innovation and entrepreneurialism, and to taking bold decisions to secure the future of Rosemary CVS. Underpinning this was a strong set of morals visible in almost all staff and board members, who were very much invested emotionally in the community they lived in and wanted to ensure the success of the voluntary and community sector in Rosemary.

The staffing structure was small and straightforward. Oliver, the CEO, had a strong relationship with both staff and trustees, and the staffing structure underneath him was a flat one. Oliver had progressed to becoming the CEO from previously being a development worker within Rosemary CVS, and as such, in addition to being the CEO he still kept some pieces of sector specific development work – although this may have also been related to decreased capacity of development staff following the restructure. Below him sat the following staff:

- Maggie, the development worker;
- Katie, the administrator;
- Karen, the finance manager;
- Faye, the funding officer.

Each of these staff worked part time, officially, but all four appeared dedicated to their job to the extent that they took work home with them and came in outside of their core hours frequently.

Beyond these four permanent members of staff, there were also three more members of sessional staff who had significantly lower interactions with the core office environment, and hence do not feature much in my reporting of the research. These staff were:

- Donna, an IT officer;
- Rebecca, a project worker;
- Rachel, an additional project worker.

My role within Rosemary CVS was agreed as working alongside both the staff and the board to draw up a feasibility study for a small number of charging options which would be identified by the board in the course of my time at Rosemary CVS. In terms of my role impacting on the norms and routines experienced within Rosemary CVS, my presence here appeared to have a lesser impact than in other LIOs, and this may be because the board had already taken bold and innovative decisions in the past and were already working alongside staff members to assess the future direction with respect to chargeable support services. It may also have been because there was already an organisation-wide dialogue about charging occurring when I arrived.

The tone set by the board was highly innovative, as expressed in the comments below, where Cora – the chair of the board – is discussing options for income generation:

*“People get satisfaction from what they know they’re doing well. Will exploration of charging help? I’m not totally sure. I think there’s a risk that it highlights areas we’re not doing so well and people will feel vulnerable and it’ll stop being so cosy. But if we don’t organise ourselves to receive money, this CVS will be down the tube. If we can’t sustain ourselves there has to be a good reason for that. If we can’t sustain ourselves, we’re doing something wrong, people don’t want our services enough, no?”*

*“But charging for these services, what we provide at the moment. It won’t generate professional income, will it? We couldn’t get to that level. You and I both know it. That’s why I’m worried. All I think about these days is ‘how can we make a profit?’ You get professional fundraisers with a percentage of money earned built in to their contract. Could we do that? Perhaps. Should we do that? It’s not as far removed from what we do now as everyone seems to think it is. What’s the difference, really?”*

Cora, Chair of the trustee board, Rosemary CVS

Interestingly, there appeared to be tensions – although none so explicit as conveyed at Parsley CVS – between the narratives of some board members and staff members. Whilst many board members – who were probably most aware of the financial situation – took a stance that taking quick action to move into charging was the only way forwards (with some debate around which services should be chargeable and at what level), a number of members of staff were concerned about this. This is exemplified in the comments below, from Faye:

*“It’s something to do with the timing of it, and there’s something really, there’s almost something to do with I feel personally that we are trying to act too quickly, and by doing that we are going to shoot ourselves in the foot. So the board have said a nice clean start into starting to charge in the April, given it’s the new financial year. And I feel like,*

*we're still going to be establishing what we want to charge for? Why we want to charge for it? And how groups are going to react to that, at that time? And then I feel we're not going to have full information about it. So I think, it's a moral thing really, you can't just force it onto the groups you know, you've got to go with them hand in hand, or it's not fair, because ultimately you're a membership organisation. You're there for the groups, with the groups, and you make decisions together."*

Faye, Funding Advisor, Rosemary CVS

It often appeared that any resistance towards charging from staff was based around four arguments: firstly, legal arguments arising mostly from Faye around moves towards charging not being in line with the constitution of the organisation or its aims, and not being aligned with arguments surrounding being a membership organisation. Secondly, often from Maggie, who worked directly with the smallest FLOs, there was a strong moral objection about the lack of provision for those FLOs that could not afford to pay, in a situation where by virtue of the CVS providing for a rural area, most FLOs using Rosemary CVS were small ones that could not afford to pay. A third narrative resisted moves towards charging based on the underpinning values of the voluntary sector, which in his view *"shouldn't become more like business because then you're no longer the voluntary sector are you, your values are no longer unique."* Whilst this may appear to be linked to the strong moral basis for objection followed in the second argument, it tended to be slightly different in that it was based less on morality and more on a normative perception of what the sector should be. Finally, there was a fourth level of argument around professionalism, which asked whether the services provided by Rosemary CVS were 'professional' enough for FLOs to justify paying for them - this is particularly interesting given that the organisation was happy enough to receive public funds to provide the same services. Each of these arguments will be explored in more depth in Chapter 6 with reference to the various accompanying actor worldviews of legitimacy in respect of chargeable support services.

Despite the resistant tones present in these arguments from staff, staff members were also keen to contribute to the income generation of Rosemary CVS and believed that it was a priority for Rosemary CVS to have a sustainable future. Therefore, in spite of this undercurrent of resistance, staff still managed to work closely with the board in establishing possible directions for charging, and this was visible in a series of staff and board joint meetings.

In general, attitudes towards chargeable services were not particularly driven by securing resources from the organisational field, nor were they related to any normative pressures placed on the organisation. Other than the references above to Faye's ideas around the legislative concerns surrounding charging, actors within Rosemary CVS gave little consideration to the organisational field external to the CVS itself. Rather, actors were more focused on their own organisation, treating Rosemary CVS as an institution in its own right by giving credence to the historic development of the organisation in order to examine how any programme of might chargeable support services might sit within the historic context and purpose of the organisation.

There was one notable exception to this view, which related to an occasion when Oliver suggested setting prices for chargeable services alongside other local LIOs: interestingly, Oliver viewed this as partnership work rather than as price fixing or collusion. This is flagged here to demonstrate that despite a largely internal consideration of charging, there were still some interesting dynamics arising from the pressures of the organisational field, as Oliver's desire to set prices alongside other LIOs was driven by a concern that they would otherwise compete with Rosemary CVS for business and Rosemary CVS may in turn lose many of its service users if other LIOs were offering cheaper services.

Charging options being considered by Rosemary CVS were varied and extensive. Options on the table for charging for services included charging a high level fee for membership; charging for writing funding bids; charging for

putting in a charity or community interest company application; charging for one to one advice; pricing up various packages of support to be sold in bulk; charging for specialist areas of advice as related to staff interests – for example, moving outside of the initial catchment area to charge nationally for advice on environmental projects and energy saving projects. These were not the only options being considered – both the board and staff members, but particularly the board, were extremely keen to explore all possible charging options.

## 5.6 Thyme CVS

By contrast to the three LIOs I had already visited, my fourth site, Thyme CVS, stood out in many ways. The staff and management at Thyme CVS appeared to be much more business-focussed, and dialogue at the CVS often focused on getting the most out of a relationship, and not under-selling the benefited offered by Thyme CVS. There was also significant levels of strategic level future planning occurring, with an attempt to position Thyme CVS as the leading CVS in Thyme County and perhaps even beyond that, Thyme Region.

It is worth noting that Thyme CVS had also secured a contract for being the 'central infrastructure organisation' of Thyme County – in turn meaning that they had a role providing infrastructure support to other LIOs operating within Thyme County. In addition, Thyme CVS had a high level of engagement with the public sector, and were beginning to offer chargeable services to public sector partners in addition to considering providing chargeable support services to FLOs. For instance, Thyme CVS held a database of all FLOs operating across Thyme County, and were charging public sector providers for use of that information.

My role within Thyme CVS was to investigate the feasibility of a chargeable membership scheme, including proposals around at what level membership should be charged and the services it would include. Interestingly, despite

being large and demonstrating particularly business-like values, Thyme CVS did not have an organised membership system so this would need to be set up from scratch. 'Members' as classified by Thyme CVS staff were in practice only organisations for whom Thyme had purchased the contact details of and sent emails out to – these organisations had not expressly signed up to being a member, so any membership scheme would need to be developed from scratch.

My understanding was that perhaps this lack of membership scheme was as a result of rapid and chaotic growth, as driven by an ambitious and visionary but somewhat disorganised CEO, Edward. Edward was well liked and respected as a genuine and charismatic leader. Edward headed up a large team and was highly respected across the organisation. In my initial meeting with Edward, he offered a radical assessment of the future for Thyme CVS and its' surrounding institutional environment, outlined below:

*“We’re looking at who we partner with at the moment. The community foundation is a potential option and so we could do capacity building work and they could work alongside us to deliver monitoring and evaluation work. We’re thinking about working with both GP commissioners and health providers. We’re almost ignoring the county council, though... They’re our main funder but we’re not seeing them as our future. We’re not seeing them as a strategic partner. They fund two thirds of our income one way or the other. But we don’t think they’ll exist in three years time.”*

Edward, CEO, Thyme CVS

Beneath Edward sat Connie, the Deputy CEO; along with Eric, the manager of external health programmes; Tania, the manager of the development team; Julia, the finance manager; Charlotte, the volunteer centre manager, and Estelle, the manager of the Thyme County infrastructure contract. This group collectively formed the senior management team. During my time with Thyme CVS, Edward left to take up a new job (for reasons unrelated to the

changes occurring with respect to charging), and Connie was then became the acting CEO.

The majority of my work during my time with Thyme CVS linked closely with members of the senior management team, and members of the development team who were delivering the services that could potentially become chargeable. Within the development team, the officers were:

- Emma – a funding advice officer;
- Nick – a development worker;
- Rani – an events and training officer;
- Roz – an administrator;
- Mandy – a marketing officer.

The board members were a mix of voluntary sector and private sector professionals operating locally. However, interestingly for what appeared to be such a business-minded organisation, the board appeared to have very little say in the approach to charging for services: at one point, Julia said to me: *“don’t tell the board about it [chargeable services plans] yet though, I don’t think they’re ready for it yet mentally, we need to lull them in gently”*, and this sentiment was reflected in a number of similar conversations.

As mentioned above, the narratives present at Thyme CVS were particularly business-like compared to my experiences with the other LIOs. For instance, the majority of staff wore business dress, and the office worked in silence most of the time, with staff operating independently of each other. In terms of my role within this environment, this formal and business-like approach made it much more difficult to assimilate into being part of the culture. Despite my best efforts, staff would often answer questions intended to start up conversations with short, to the point answers. A similar situation would occur at lunchtimes, where I would actively try and engage staff in conversation, but most of them appeared too busy and too focused to take much of a lunch break.

These business-like values were reflected in the narratives of many of the actors within the LIO: there was only a single staff member – Emma, the funding advisor – who had any negative reaction to conversations around charging for support services. The general attitudes towards chargeable support services were summed up best in the extract from a conversation held between myself and Connie, the Deputy CEO:

Connie: *“Of course they [FLOs] don’t want it [chargeable services]. But they need it because they need us and without us they don’t get very far in the local sector. They need access, that’s what we provide. If they have to pay or leave that access behind, most will pay.”*

Dawn: *“Access to what?”*

Connie: *“Information, influence, connections. All of those. We’re an enabling organisation. We enable others to get to where they need to be. We enable our partners, we enable our groups, we enable our volunteers. People value that, so they will pay. They’ll have no choice – if we pussyfoot around it we’ll never get anywhere.”*

Most interestingly here, given the widespread acceptance and endorsement by staff of a business-like approach, were the attitudes of actors of the organisational field surrounding Thyme CVS. Staff made very limited reference to concerns around how charging would be perceived within the organisational field at large – other than a brief request to me to check the service level agreements to be certain that charging would not violate them. In short, very few actors appeared to perceive or consider the existence of any normative pressures being directed towards Thyme CVS from the organisational field.

As an overview, Thyme CVS therefore appeared to be an ambitious organisation, with a very business oriented approach. Many of the actors within the LIO appeared to fully support moves into charging, and rather than feeling any pressure from the external institutional environment, there

appeared to be a use of that place within the institutional environment to lead on changes into chargeable services.

## 5.7 Summary of the four LIOs

This chapter has presented an overview of four very different LIOs with four different approaches to charging: the first, Parsley CVS, having an urgent need to replace lost funding and hence a chaotic approach to charging due to the need to begin charging before any planning had fully taken place. There were strong moral objections to charging from a number of actors within Parsley CVS, but these conflicted with some very strong support for charging from others.

Sage CVS was a much larger CVS, taking a much more methodical and planned approach to charging from starting the consideration of charging well in advance of when income from such services would be needed. Many actors within Sage CVS favoured working collaboratively with their external environment, and hence wanted to take steps into charging only once their 'partners' – often local authority bodies – were also on board with the ideas.

Rosemary CVS was, like Parsley CVS, needing to replace lost funding relatively quickly. However, unlike Parsley CVS the approaches towards charging were much more considered, starting from a broad base of examining all of the possible options and considering the feasibility of each in turn. Whilst there were some objections to charging from staff – on professional, legislative and moral terms – there was also a practical acknowledgement that if charging would sustain the organisation they must find a way to do it, whilst taking account of their collective concerns. This practical acknowledgement was probably driven by a strong board who had a pervasive survival instinct, and would be willing to justify most types of charging activity if it could guarantee survival.

Finally, Thyme CVS stood out from the other three LIOs, given the lack of dissenting narratives – almost all staff favoured moves into charging, which seemed to be underpinned by a strong evolution of Thyme CVS' institutional values as business-minded and 'leading the sector'. Interestingly, most staff within Thyme CVS had little or no concern for the reactions of or pressures from the external institutional environment: rather, they were pleased to be seen to be leading the sector forwards in a professional and efficient manner.

Using the information presented in this chapter as a context for how each LIO was operating and the types of narratives presented at the time of my study, the discussion that follows in Chapter 6 will explore the narratives presented here in more depth.

## Chapter 6

### Discussion: actor worldviews of legitimacy

#### 6.1 Introduction

My intention in this chapter is to present ethnographic data which I will use to discuss my findings in respect of the research question set out in earlier chapters. For ease of reference, this is:

***How do actors within LIOs consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy surrounding an institutional shift towards charging FLOs for support services?***

The discussion that follows in this chapter is based on having undergone a template analysis process which I detail in section 6.2. I conducted the template analysis using project data which was stored and processed using NVivo 10 (see Chapter 4). The arguments presented later in this chapter therefore come as a direct result of this process of analysis.

My key findings presented in the chapter are a typology of thirteen separate actor worldviews of legitimacy, each of which is underpinned by a particular dominant value set and each of which is associated with particular rhetorical strategies which actors employ in order to argue for their respective worldview of legitimacy. Further, I present an eight stage process of actor-level legitimacy shaping and influencing through which I argue that this typology plays out in practice.

I begin in section 6.2 by detailing the template analysis process, with a particular focus on the stage by stage development of and refinement of the template. In section 6.3, I then turn attention to discussing in more detail the process of developing the thirteen actor worldviews of legitimacy which arose as one of the key findings of the process, along with the development of the dominant value sets underpinning those thirteen worldviews. In section 6.4 I then present the findings in relation to the thirteen actor worldviews of

legitimacy and their underpinning dominant value sets. In 6.5 I then explore the development process in relation to the rhetorical strategies associated with each worldview of legitimacy, before moving in 6.6 to treat the findings in relation to the rhetorical strategies employed by actors. In 6.7 I move to presenting a typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, which maps the thirteen different actor worldviews of legitimacy against their respective underpinning dominant value sets and the rhetorical strategies employed by each actor type, along with supplementary information to help characterise each worldview of legitimacy. In section 6.8, I then discuss the analysis process in respect of how the ideas cited in the typology play out in practice. In section 6.9, I describe the findings relating to this, presenting an eight stage process of actor legitimacy shaping and influencing. This eight stage process details the ways in which actors consider and construct their legitimacy worldviews and in turn use those worldviews to seek to influence the institutional environment. Finally in 6.10, I summarise the key findings of the discussion chapter.

## 6.2 Template analysis process

My choice of template analysis as a tool for analysing the data collected throughout the ethnography is detailed in Chapter 4. In this section, I turn to present a short overview of the template analysis process that I went through in section 6.2.1, before examining the development of each template in detail through each successive revisions of the original template in sections 6.2.2-6.2.10. Given the nature of template analysis in being able to add to, refine and reject themes, my theory development ran directly alongside the refinement of my templates.

### *6.2.1 Overview of the template analysis process*

Template analysis (Kent et al., 2000; King, 2004) involves analysis based on the systematic building up of a data set, through which data is coded based

on the themes arising from the data along with any themes brought to the table through the literature. These themes are then tested by running new revisions of the template on successively larger subsets of the data, adding in, dropping and refining themes until the full data set is included and themes are no longer arising from the data. This allows a flexible process of analysis that sees a final theory develop directly in line with the analysis process, as the template becomes more and more accurate and refined as it progresses through further revisions.

In total, 325 documents were collected from the ethnography, comprising 99 documents from Parsley CVS; 76 documents from Sage CVS; 65 documents from Rosemary CVS, and 85 documents from Thyme CVS. The documents collected took a number of forms. Predominantly they consisted of:

- Daily research diaries, which included both notes written about informal conversations and notes from informal interviews, as well as notes based on observations of conversations, routines, actions processes and day to day proceedings;
- Transcripts of formal interviews;
- Transcripts of formal recorded meetings;
- Notes from formal meetings that were not recorded.

In addition, the documents collected also comprised copies of emails; organisational documents such as funding bids, board meeting minutes, constitutions and strategy documents; and a number of photographs.

Through every stage of the template analysis, I used NVivo to explore the data in more detail in a number of ways, such as annotating text; creating links between sources to draw comparisons across different source material; building memos into source material in order to elaborate upon my thinking and store my insights; creating relationships to define specific links between two project items, and exploring the data using framework matrices in order to map specific sections of data against each other.

I commenced my template analysis by producing an initial template by which to code the data. Template analysis allows themes to be brought to the table *a priori* in addition to being generated through the data, and for my first template, I brought a number of themes to the table which arose through both the exploratory interviews and the literature. These themes are detailed further in section 6.2.3 but focused predominantly on ideas of the cultural-cognitive aspects of charging for support services; the normative aspects of charging for support services, and ideas of legitimacy in relation to charging for support services - the former two as I perceived from the literature a strong basis for linkages of these issues with ideas of legitimacy.

In NVivo, the high level categories are called 'parent nodes' and the more specific sub-categories sitting underneath them are known as 'child nodes' so I will use this terminology from here for consistency. In my first template therefore, the parent nodes concentrated on the three ideas set out above: the cultural-cognitive, normative and legitimacy based ideas relating to chargeable support services, whilst the child nodes underneath them linked to various aspects of normative pressures and various aspects of legitimacy.

I ran this first template on a sub-section of the data - specifically, that arising from Parsley CVS - to explore its applicability and begin the process of revising, adding and dropping nodes and themes from the template. As I coded the data based on the template, I re-ordered the nodes which I was using to store information in NVivo, allowing the template to evolve organically.

Following the first template analysis stage, I then extended the template outwards. The templates went through a process of nine template revisions in total. For the second template, I added two new parent nodes to act as 'integrative' nodes which served as overarching themes cutting across the whole of the data set. These two integrative parent nodes looked at models of funding, and the institutional environment respectively. (At this point, my notion of the institutional environment was particularly directed at the character of the changes surrounding the organisation within their

organisational field and organisational population.) In addition to adding the two integrative nodes, I also added a number of child nodes sitting under each of the already existing parent nodes (cultural cognitive aspects of charging; normative aspects of charging; ideas of legitimacy in relation to charging), which allowed for elaboration on the individual aspects contributing to each of these parent nodes.

Re-running the second template, but on a slightly larger set of data, led to additional changes. Re-running a template was a process that occurred a small number of times during my data analysis, when I wanted to not only check that my assumptions were correct, but also to explore the information contained within that specific phase of analysis in more depth, or to check for any additional or different themes which may have been missed. In order to 're-run' a template, I went back to the beginning of that stage of analysis and re-coded the full information contained within that analysis phase in order to check that nothing had been missed, particularly in terms of relationships between particular themes, people or artefacts. Where I re-ran a template, this process of checking my assumptions would take place before basing the next phase of analysis on the themes contained within the current template.

In my third revision I added a third integrative parent node relating to 'change', with a particular view to exploring the reluctance of actors to change, or the welcoming or acceptance of change by actors. I also dropped the cultural-cognitive and normative aspects of the template in order to examine legitimacy in more detail, breaking legitimacy down into a number of more detailed child nodes.

On my fourth template revision, I dropped all three of the integrative themes and focused on legitimacy in more detail as the core issue, which I then remodelled to a slightly different configuration of legitimacy on my fifth revision.

This fifth revision provided the basis for the theoretical model of actor worldviews of legitimacy as presented in section 6.4 and further in section 6.7, as it provided the full range of legitimacy types used in the model. From here, for the sixth revision I explored the underlying factors which led to different actors experiencing or perceiving different types of legitimacy with differing weights, and this led to uncovering a dominant value set and an 'actor type' associated with each type of legitimacy in Template 6.

I explored this further in the seventh revision of the template, seeking to examine how the legitimacy preferences of each actor type played out in practice, and at this point established associated rhetorical strategies for the promotion of their preferred worldview of legitimacy - or the negation of that of others. On the eighth revision, as a result of the clear linkages between types of actors, their dominant value sets which underpin their worldviews of legitimacy, and the rhetorical strategies used to promote their preferred worldview of legitimacy, I examined the role of actors using these worldview frames to take an active part in shaping their institutional environment. As a result of this, I re-introduced an integrative node relating to change, but this time in the guise of 'window of opportunity'. This node referred to the idea that actors use the perceived instability that comes with shifting institutional environments to take advantage of perceived weaknesses in the organisation which may not have existed previously and hence appear to be presented with a 'window of opportunity'. This window of opportunity is then used to seek to shape the institutional environment surrounding the actor or group of actors.

Finally, I followed the development of this integrative parent node into a ninth revision of the template which looked at the ways in which actors react to such a window of opportunity and the ways in which legitimacy plays out through it. This ninth version set the basis for the eight stage process of actor legitimacy shaping and influencing which is set out later in the chapter.

Through the next subsections 6.2.2 - 6.2.10, I discuss my template development process in more detail, with a subsection dedicated to each phase of the template analysis.

### 6.2.2 *Template 1*

To form the initial template for analysis, nodes arose from a combination of the research question at hand, and from complementary themes arising within the literature. Where a theme arising from the literature was included in the initial analysis template, this was only done where the theme had also been reflected in the preliminary interviews (see Appendix A), ensuring that there was an empirical basis for its initial inclusion. I therefore took the central themes from the exploratory interviews and tied them together with some of the key concepts arising consistently throughout the institutional literature. Doing so produced three overarching themes which I applied to the coding process as parent nodes:

- Cultural cognitive aspects of chargeable support services;
- Perceived normative pressures surrounding chargeable support services;
- Legitimacy issues in relation to chargeable support services.

I then broke legitimacy down into four child nodes arising both from the literature and from the exploratory interviews: the initial areas of legitimacy I included in the template were moral legitimacy, political legitimacy, technical legitimacy, and legal legitimacy. The first three themes arose directly from Taylor and Warburton's (2003) paper given its' specific voluntary sector focus; the latter arose from conversations in the exploratory interviews relating to ideas of the public benefit requirement in charity law and mission drift. Further, I broke down the parent node of normative pressures into a number of child nodes, which were predominantly driven through the exploratory interviews but backed up through the literature.

These themes combined to produce the first template, detailed below. I then ran the first template on a sub-section of the data relating to Parsley CVS in order to test the applicability of the template. The reason for choosing Parsley CVS to explore first was that this was the site where most tensions arose visibly: hence I felt that the widest variety of debates were covered here.

### **Template 1**

1. The effects of cultural cognitive aspects of charging
2. The effects of perceived normative pressures
  - 2.1 Funders
  - 2.2 FLOs
  - 2.3 Local government
  - 2.4 Partners or competitors?
3. Legitimacy
  - 3.1 Moral
  - 3.2 Political
  - 3.3 Technical
  - 3.4 Legal
    - 3.4.1 Public benefit
    - 3.4.2 Mission drift

### *6.2.3 Template 2*

I coded the data from Parsley CVS according to the nodes in Template 1, but as I did so I also had the flexibility to add new nodes and modify or remove others as necessary. I had intended to use NVivo to add in a number of themes arising from the data, however, at this early stage of the process I felt that I was constraining myself in the use of NVivo into having a framework that followed a particularly hierarchical structure. For the second template, I therefore coded the data in NVivo and then took key words, sentences and themes out of it and onto paper to arrange in whatever format felt most appropriate.

This left me with a template as follows in Template 2 below, having identified various elements that I felt fitted as themes under each parent node, and

additionally having identified two overarching 'integrative' parent nodes. Those themes that I developed to sit under the cultural-cognitive node reflected aspects of the data relating to organisational values, culture, beliefs and routines that had been established over a period of time. The inclusion of additional themes that sat under normative pressures arose from a focus on actor perceptions of where such normative pressures may arise from, and the perceived issues that normative pressures gave rise to. The expansion of themes under the legitimacy node was in order to encapsulate a wider range of views coming from the data in respect of whether, and more importantly why, charging was seen as either a legitimate or an illegitimate direction for the LIO.

Template 2 provided an expanded template in the ways set out above. I ran Template 2 on data relating to Parsley CVS and part of Thyme CVS.

## **Template 2**

1. Effects of cultural cognitive aspects to charging
  - 1.1 Staff motivation
  - 1.2 Internal attitudes
  - 1.3 Strategic direction
  - 1.4 Organisational values
  - 1.5 Power and politics
  - 1.6 Openness to change
  - 1.7 Degree of conflict
2. Effects of perceived normative pressures surrounding moves into charging
  - 2.1 Funders
  - 2.2 FLOs
  - 2.3 Local government
  - 2.4 Partners or competitors?
  - 2.5 Wider sector and community
  - 2.6 Trust (placed in the LIO by various stakeholders)
  - 2.7 Independence (from various stakeholders and the wider sector)
  - 2.8 Influence (ability to influence or be influenced by stakeholders and the wider sector)
3. Legitimacy
  - 3.1 Moral
  - 3.2 Political
  - 3.3 Technical
  - 3.4 Legal
  - 3.5 Public benefit

- 3.6 Mission drift
- 3.7 Innovative
- 3.8 Professional
- 3.9 Demand based
- 3.10 Financial
- 3.11 Practical

- 4. Integrative node: institutional environment
- 5. Integrative node: models of funding

#### 6.2.4 *Template 3*

Although through Template 2 new material clearly arose across the board, the running of Template 2 on a larger set of data than that which was used in Template 1 saw significantly more material arise in respect of legitimacy than in respect of the first two nodes sitting within Template 1 and Template 2. I therefore dropped the first two parent nodes in order to focus on issues of legitimacy more deeply. This was largely because not only did it appear that there was a significantly higher volume of data being coded in respect of legitimacy issues, but also that many of the issues covered in the first two nodes appeared themselves to be symptoms of or contributors to attitudes towards legitimacy.

I therefore progressed to Template 3 which saw the rejection of nodes relating to the cultural-cognitive and normative aspects of charging, and the creation of a number of child nodes under the parent node relating to legitimacy.

In addition, three themes from the second template were modified at this stage, namely the public benefit, mission drift and practical aspects of legitimacy. The first two were moved to becoming child nodes sitting under 'legal' legitimacy, with the latter being accounted for by the elaboration of 'technical' legitimacy to include practical aspects such as skills-based capabilities. I undertook this change with a view to synthesising aspects of the data that were similar in some way and had common themes relating to

practical ability to deliver chargeable support services. Further, a new theme of 'relationship based' legitimacy was introduced, which picked up some of the ideas lost from the normative node which had been dropped.

Additionally, a new integrative node relating to change was added, which focused specifically on actors' reactions to change in terms of ideas such as reluctance to change or appetite for it. I added this because much of the data arising from Parsley CVS suggested actors possessing a reluctance for change towards chargeable support services, whereas the data arising from Thyme CVS tended to show a favouring of moves towards chargeable support services.

This new integrative node combined with the dropping of cultural-cognitive and normative aspects of charging and the changes to the legitimacy node and the themes underneath it formed the basis of Template 3 below. Template 3 was then run on an expanded version of the data set, relating to all data from Parsley CVS and all data from Thyme CVS.

### **Template 3**

1. Legitimacy
  - 1.1 Moral
  - 1.2 Political
    - 1.2.1 Internal
    - 1.2.2 External
  - 1.3 Technical
    - 1.3.1 Capacity
    - 1.3.2 Skills based
    - 1.3.3 Systems
  - 1.4 Legal
    - 1.4.1 Public benefit
    - 1.4.2 Mission drift
    - 1.4.3 Contractual
    - 1.4.4 Governing document
  - 1.5 Innovative
  - 1.6 Professional
    - 1.6.1 Qualifications / experience
    - 1.6.2 Reputation
    - 1.6.3 Branding
  - 1.7 Demand based
  - 1.8 Financial
    - 1.8.1 Financial pressures

- 1.8.2 Reserves and financial situation
- 1.8.3 Ability to pay
- 1.9 Relationship based
  - 1.9.1 Relationship expectations
  - 1.9.2 Perceived relationship pressures
  - 1.9.3 Type of relationship
  - 1.9.4 Potential relationship threats

Integrative node: institutional environment

Integrative node: models of funding

Integrative node: change

#### 6.2.5 *Template 4*

Having coded data from Parsley CVS and Thyme CVS on the basis of Template 3, I made some slight revisions to move to Template 4. Here, the key changes were that Template 4 abandoned the integrative nodes to give a focus on legitimacy that is stronger still. I chose to do this for different reasons in relation to each node. In respect of the institutional environment integrative node, the data had clarified the notion that perceptions of the institutional environment varied highly and often appeared to be influenced by an actor's disposition towards charging. In turn, it became clear that the character of the institutional environment sat outside the bounds of the study and what sat within the bounds of the study related more to the character of actors' perceptions of the institutional environment. In relation to the models of funding integrative node, it again began to appear that models of funding were a means by which actors sought to implement their disposition in relation to the legitimacy of chargeable services, but that actual considerations of models of funding and how feasible which models were sat outside of the realm of the study. The integrative node relating to change was dropped for a different reason, as the data appeared to reflect the idea that change in relation to charging was already reflected through actor perceptions of legitimacy and whether charging was or was not a legitimate direction.

Other main changes under Template 4 involved the drawing together of technical and professional nodes to become a single theme of 'professionalism'; the drawing together of 'financial pressures' and 'reserves and financial situation' to become a single sub-theme of 'financial influences'; the shifting of 'ability to pay' into the 'demand based' theme and a new sub-theme of 'service design'. The template also incorporated the addition of a new 'leading the sector' theme, which arose particularly strongly in the Thyme CVS data where many actors were keen to be the first LIO in the area to move into the chargeable arena, and hence justified charging in terms of ideas around leading the way for others to follow.

Template 4 is set out below. I ran Template 4 on an expanded version of the data which accounted for Parsley CVS, Thyme CVS and part of the data from Rosemary CVS.

## **Template 4**

### 1. Legitimacy

- 1.1 Moral
- 1.2 Political
  - 1.2.1 Internal
  - 1.2.2 External
- 1.3 Professionalism
  - 1.3.1 Capacity
  - 1.3.2 Skills, qualifications and experience
  - 1.3.3 Systems
  - 1.3.4 Reputation and branding
- 1.4 Legal
  - 1.4.1 Public benefit
  - 1.4.2 Mission drift
  - 1.4.3 Contractual
  - 1.4.4 Governing document
- 1.5 Innovative
- 1.5 Demand based
  - 1.5.1 Ability to pay
  - 1.5.2 Service design
- 1.6 Financial
  - 1.6.1 Financial situation
- 1.7 Relationship based
  - 1.7.1 Relationship expectations

- 1.7.2 Perceived relationship pressures
- 1.7.3 Type of relationships
- 1.7.4 Potential relationship threats

#### 6.2.6 *Template 5*

From analysis of the data set using Template 4, with its sole focus on legitimacy, a range of new legitimacy types were established, some of which had been more subtle and not necessarily picked out in earlier analyses. At this point, the legitimacy sub-themes were abandoned, to make way for a broader range of more subtly distinct legitimacy types. These are detailed below in Template 5, which was again re-applied to the full set of documents.

Given the inherent focus of the research at the actor level, I saw these legitimacy types as the frames through which actors sought to consider the justification for a particular direction in respect of chargeable support services. I was therefore at this stage looking for information relating to the justification of why charging was, or was not seen as legitimate, and then grouping together data that appeared similar in terms of actor justifications for their views on charging. This therefore set the basis of the findings relating to actor 'worldviews' of legitimacy, as opposed to simply the identification of types of legitimacy. The thirteen legitimacy categories established here therefore went on to form the basis of the legitimacy worldviews considered in sections 6.4 and later 6.7. Given their criticality to the findings, I will discuss the development of these ideas in more detail in section 6.3.

At this stage of revisions to Template 4, professionalism was changed to become 'technical' legitimacy to encompass a more specific angle, and legal was changed to become 'regulative', to fall into line with areas of the literature where this term arose. 'Demand based' legitimacy was changed to 'opportunistic' legitimacy, reflecting the justification from various actors that if there was a demand for a service, the LIO should take the opportunity to meet that demand and that taking opportunities as they arose was a driver

for legitimacy in its own right. 'Financial' legitimacy became 'survival-based legitimacy' at this point, where the justification for chargeable services was based on earning enough income to survive, whilst relationship-based legitimacy at this point transitioned to an overarching category of 'stakeholder legitimacy', whereby actors sought legitimacy through conformity with stakeholder expectations.

In addition, five new and more subtle legitimacy considerations were added at this point to the template:

- 'Historical' legitimacy, reflecting actors that valued an organisation's historical positions and development when framing legitimacy considerations;
- 'Strategic' legitimacy, which expresses a strong preference for abiding by an *a priori* set of strategic documents regardless of the consequences;
- Legitimacy based on the institutional environment being 'harmonious', in that an action is legitimate if it keeps all parties happy;
- 'Normative' legitimacy based on conforming with internal perceptions of external institutional pressures; and
- 'Pioneering' legitimacy which places a value on leading the sector and being seen to do so.

In line with the changes seen in the development of a number of more subtle legitimacies above, a subtle but critical development in respect of the move to Template 5 was the addition of the word 'worldviews' to the parent node of legitimacy. In turn this ascribed views of legitimacy to particular actors and their own personal frames of legitimacy as opposed to static types which exist outside of the worlds of actors. I ran Template 5 on data relating to Parsley CVS, Rosemary CVS and Thyme CVS.

### **Template 5**

1. Worldview of legitimacy
  - 1.1 Moral
  - 1.2 Political

- 1.3 Technical
- 1.4 Regulative
- 1.5 Innovative
- 1.6 Opportunistic
- 1.7 Survival based
- 1.8 Stakeholder
- 1.9 Historical
- 1.10 Strategic
- 1.11 Harmonious
- 1.12 Normative
- 1.13 Pioneering

### 6.2.7 *Template 6*

The analysis I ran using Template 5 led to the notion that different groups of actors might favour different types of legitimacy, or have different worldviews of what is and what is not legitimate. As such, I re-ran the analysis using Template 5 to examine whether this might be the case, using the themes established in Template 5 and exploring their linkages with specific actors more deeply through framework matrices, queries and drawing comparisons across and between the data. This analysis did indeed lead to identification of different types of actors with different worldviews, and along with them, data came to the fore relating to the values which drove actors to view legitimacy in a certain way. I therefore sought to establish the value sets of the actors sitting within different legitimacy worldviews. These were not always clear cut, with actors often espousing a number of value sets. I therefore moved towards establishing of 'dominant value sets' linking to the primary and core values which shaped the way that an actor might see the world. These associated dominant value sets in turn aligned with the thirteen separate legitimacy worldviews. These dominant value sets are discussed later in the chapter in sections 6.3 and 6.4 and formed a core addition to Template 6.

I therefore developed Template 6 with a view to establishing through the data the linkages between actor worldviews and their associated dominant value

set. I ran Template 6 on an expanded set of data to account for Parsley CVS, Thyme CVS, Rosemary CVS and part of Sage CVS.

The process of analysis in relation to both this template and Template 5 are discussed in more detail in section 6.3 in respect of their usage in the formation of actor legitimacy worldviews and underpinning dominant value sets.

## Template 6

1. Worldview of legitimacy
  - 1.1 Moral
    - 1.1.1 *The resistor*
      - 1.1.1.1 Strong moral compass
      - 1.1.1.2 Ideologically driven
  - 1.2 Political
    - 1.2.1 *The quiet dissenter*
      - 1.2.1.1 Perceived authority
  - 1.3 Technical
    - 1.3.1 *The pragmatist*
      - 1.3.1.1 Practicality
      - 1.3.1.2 Business as usual
      - 1.3.1.3 Things being seen to run smoothly
      - 1.3.1.4 Systems and processes
  - 1.4 Regulative
    - 1.4.1 *The contentious objector*
      - 1.4.1.1 Legal frameworks such as governing documents
      - 1.4.1.2 Contractual commitments
  - 1.5 Innovative
    - 1.5.1 *The progressive*
      - 1.5.1.1 Making progress
      - 1.5.1.2 Advancing practice
  - 1.6 Opportunistic
    - 1.6.1 *The opportunist*
      - 1.6.1.1 Taking new opportunities as they arise
      - 1.6.1.2 Filling gaps
      - 1.6.1.3 Incremental change
  - 1.7 Survival based
    - 1.7.1 *The survivor*
      - 1.7.1.1 Financial stability
  - 1.8 Stakeholder

- 1.8.1 *The team player*
  - 1.8.1.1 Stakeholder relationships
  - 1.8.1.2 Conformity with institutional environment

1.9 Historical

- 1.9.1 *The authoritarian*
  - 1.9.1.1 Internal norms and routines

1.10 Strategic

- 1.10.1 *The strategist*
  - 1.10.1.1 Sticking to a plan
  - 1.10.1.2 Frameworks and documents

1.11 Harmonious

- 1.11.1 *The submissive*
  - 1.11.1.1 Actively seeking harmony
  - 1.11.1.2 Moves away from conflict

1.12 Normative

- 1.12.1 *The reputation conscious*
  - 1.12.1.1 External perceptions of organisation

1.13 Pioneering

- 1.13.1 *The leader*
  - 1.13.1.1 Leading the industry / sector

### 6.2.8 *Template 7*

Having coded a large section of the data in relation to Template 6, I identified information that led me to believe that different types of actors with different dominant value sets and different worldviews of legitimacy might argue for those legitimacy worldviews in different ways. For example, a number of actors whose worldview of legitimacy was based on possessing strong moral values argued based on their shared values with others, but other actors whose worldview of legitimacy was based on opportunism argued based on the time sensitive nature of the perceived opportunity to move into chargeable services. I sought to code the data with rhetorical strategies in mind, whereby actors employed persuasive language in order to further their own worldview. In doing so, I actively sought out data whereby actors whom I had already attached a particular worldview of legitimacy and dominant value set to, appeared in contexts where they made arguments for or against charging for services. I then examined the language used in these contexts

to draw out particular rhetorical strategies. In turn, I further revised the template to form Template 7.

In Template 7 I therefore sought to establish if the groups of actors identified within the ethnographic data used specific strategies to promote their chosen worldview of legitimacy in order to actively seek out outcomes that they believed to be more legitimate than those which did not fit their worldview. This is reflected in the template outlined below, which splits each actor type into having a dominant value set and a favoured rhetorical strategy along with their particular worldview of legitimacy. I explore the development of ideas in relation to rhetorical strategies in more depth in section 6.5.

## Template 7

1. Worldview of legitimacy
  - 1.1 Moral
    - 1.1.1 The resistor
      - 1.1.1.1 Dominant value set: Strong moral compass
      - 1.1.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: History, values
  - 1.2 Political
    - 1.2.1 The quiet dissenter
      - 1.2.1.1 Dominant value set: Perceived authority
      - 1.2.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Shared values
  - 1.3 Technical
    - 1.3.1 The pragmatist
      - 1.3.1.1 Dominant value set: Business as usual
      - 1.3.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Readiness for change
  - 1.4 Regulative
    - 1.4.1 The contentious objector
      - 1.4.1.1 Dominant value set: Legal frameworks and contractual commitments
      - 1.4.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Legal threat
  - 1.5 Innovative
    - 1.5.1 The progressive
      - 1.5.1.1 Dominant value set: Advancing practice
      - 1.5.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Knowledge development, resources

## 1.6 Opportunistic

### 1.6.1 The opportunist

1.6.1.1 Dominant value set: Demand based, filling gaps in the market, taking opportunities

1.6.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Time

## 1.7 Survival based

### 1.7.1 The survivor

1.7.1.1 Dominant value set: Financial stability

1.7.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Time, security

## 1.8 Stakeholder

### 1.8.1 The team player

1.8.1.1 Dominant value set: Conformity with institutional stakeholders

1.8.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Shared values

## 1.9 Historical

### 1.9.1 The authoritarian

1.9.1.1 Dominant value set: Internal norms and routines

1.9.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Authority, security

## 1.10 Strategic

### 1.10.1 The strategist

1.10.1.1 Dominant value set: Sticking to a plan, strategic frameworks

1.10.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: History, authority

## 1.11 Harmonious

### 1.11.1 The submissive

1.11.1.1 Dominant value set: Actively seeks harmony

1.11.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Shared values

## 1.12 Normative

### 1.12.1 The reputation conscious

1.12.1.1 Dominant value set: External perceptions of organisation

1.12.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Resources

## 1.13 Pioneering

### 1.13.1 The leader

1.13.1.1 Dominant value set: Leading the industry / sector

1.13.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Outside forces, resources

### 6.2.9 *Template 8*

Following the identification of a number of rhetorical strategies used to promote the legitimacy worldview of a particular actor type, or to negate the legitimacy worldviews of others, I re-ran Template 7 in order to explore the circumstances surrounding when these rhetorical strategies were employed by actors. Re-running the template whilst looking for this information led to a further template, Template 8. In Template 8, I replicated the categories under Template 7, but also added an overarching integrative node which I labelled 'window of opportunity': here, I was seeking information about the shifting institutional backdrop and the ways that actors reacted to it in light of their worldviews of legitimacy, dominant value sets and rhetorical strategies established in the earlier templates.

Running Template 8 allowed me to establish linkages between actors' worldviews of legitimacy at times of institutional shift. From here, I re-ran the template which established that across and between the groupings of actors and across all sites, actors appeared to follow a similar process in terms of the ways in which they perceived and responded to legitimacy, regardless of their worldview. This similar process appeared to be anchored around the idea of a shifting institutional environment presenting a new opportunity for debate and influence. Template 8 is therefore detailed below - in which the only additional element is the added integrative node of 'window of opportunity'.

#### **Template 8**

1. Worldview of legitimacy
  - 1.1 Moral
    - 1.1.1 The resistor
      - 1.1.1.1 Dominant value set: Strong moral compass
      - 1.1.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: History, values
  - 1.2 Political

- 1.2.1 The quiet dissenter
  - 1.2.1.1 Dominant value set: Perceived authority
  - 1.2.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Shared values
- 1.3 Technical
  - 1.3.1 The pragmatist
    - 1.3.1.1 Dominant value set: Business as usual
    - 1.3.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Readiness for change
- 1.4 Regulative
  - 1.4.1 The contentious objector
    - 1.4.1.1 Dominant value set: Legal frameworks and contractual commitments
    - 1.4.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Legal threat
- 1.5 Innovative
  - 1.5.1 The progressive
    - 1.5.1.1 Dominant value set: Advancing practice
    - 1.5.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Knowledge development, resources
- 1.6 Opportunistic
  - 1.6.1 The opportunist
    - 1.6.1.1 Dominant value set: Demand based, filling gaps in the market, taking opportunities
    - 1.6.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Time
- 1.7 Survival based
  - 1.7.1 The survivor
    - 1.7.1.1 Dominant value set: Financial stability
    - 1.7.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Time, security
- 1.8 Stakeholder
  - 1.8.1 The team player
    - 1.8.1.1 Dominant value set: Conformity with institutional stakeholders
    - 1.8.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Shared values
- 1.9 Historical
  - 1.9.1 The authoritarian
    - 1.9.1.1 Dominant value set: Internal norms and routines
    - 1.9.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Authority, security
- 1.10 Strategic
  - 1.10.1 The strategist
    - 1.10.1.1 Dominant value set: Sticking to a plan, strategic frameworks
    - 1.10.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: History, authority

- 1.11 Harmonious
  - 1.11.1 The submissive
    - 1.11.1.1 Dominant value set: Actively seeks harmony
    - 1.11.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Shared values
- 1.12 Normative
  - 1.12.1 The reputation conscious
    - 1.12.1.1 Dominant value set: External perceptions of organisation
    - 1.12.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Resources
- 1.13 Pioneering
  - 1.13.1 The leader
    - 1.13.1.1 Dominant value set: Leading the industry / sector
    - 1.13.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Outside forces, resources

## 2. Integrative node: window of opportunity

### 6.2.10 *Template 9*

The final template revision is Template 9, detailed below. In Template 9, I sought to clarify the detail of the information brought out through the previous addition of the 'window of opportunity' node. Data gathered under this node was all linked to the shifting institutional backdrop creating an impetus to act, but it arose in different ways and at different stages between sites and between actor groupings. Through this final revision of the template therefore, I returned to the additional codes generated in Template 8 and sought to clarify exactly how the information arising in relation to the impetus of a shifting institutional backdrop played out. This led to the creation of 8 separate stages of legitimacy shaping and influencing - detailed in sections 6.8 and 6.9. Here, data I was looking for in particular related to the ways in which actors appeared to seek progression of or reported progression of their legitimacy views into specific actions; or reporting of this having occurred in the lead up to this point.

This final version of the template provided the frame for a detailed analysis, and the final theoretical contribution. As the template revisions progressed, so did my analysis of the data and in turn my theory.

## Template 9

1. Worldview of legitimacy
  - 1.1 Moral
    - 1.1.1 The resistor
      - 1.1.1.1 Dominant value set: Strong moral compass
      - 1.1.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: History, values
  - 1.2 Political
    - 1.2.1 The quiet dissenter
      - 1.2.1.1 Dominant value set: Perceived authority
      - 1.2.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Shared values
  - 1.3 Technical
    - 1.3.1 The pragmatist
      - 1.3.1.1 Dominant value set: Business as usual
      - 1.3.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Readiness for change
  - 1.4 Regulative
    - 1.4.1 The contentious objector
      - 1.4.1.1 Dominant value set: Legal frameworks and contractual commitments
      - 1.4.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Legal threat
  - 1.5 Innovative
    - 1.5.1 The progressive
      - 1.5.1.1 Dominant value set: Advancing practice
      - 1.5.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Knowledge development, resources
  - 1.6 Opportunistic
    - 1.6.1 The opportunist
      - 1.6.1.1 Dominant value set: Demand based, filling gaps in the market, taking opportunities
      - 1.6.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Time
  - 1.7 Survival based
    - 1.7.1 The survivor
      - 1.7.1.1 Dominant value set: Financial stability
      - 1.7.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Time, security
  - 1.8 Stakeholder

- 1.8.1 The team player
  - 1.8.1.1 Dominant value set: Conformity with institutional stakeholders
  - 1.8.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Shared values
- 1.9 Historical
  - 1.9.1 The authoritarian
    - 1.9.1.1 Dominant value set: Internal norms and routines
    - 1.9.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Authority, security
- 1.10 Strategic
  - 1.10.1 The strategist
    - 1.10.1.1 Dominant value set: Sticking to a plan, strategic frameworks
    - 1.10.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: History, authority
- 1.11 Harmonious
  - 1.11.1 The submissive
    - 1.11.1.1 Dominant value set: Actively seeks harmony
    - 1.11.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Shared values
- 1.12 Normative
  - 1.12.1 The reputation conscious
    - 1.12.1.1 Dominant value set: External perceptions of organisation
    - 1.12.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Resources
- 1.13 Pioneering
  - 1.13.1 The leader
    - 1.13.1.1 Dominant value set: Leading the industry / sector
    - 1.13.1.2 Rhetorical strategy: Outside forces, resources
- 2. Integrative node: window of opportunity
  - 2.1 Actors interact with institutional environment which helps shape dominant value set
  - 2.2 Actors' worldviews of legitimacy shaped by dominant value set
  - 2.3 Actors do not typically challenge on ideas of legitimacy
  - 2.4 Actors perceive a shift in the institutional environment
  - 2.5 Internal deliberations occur in relation to perceived shifts in institutional environment
  - 2.6 Actors at odds with direction take opportunity to shape institutional direction

2.7 Actors use their worldviews of legitimacy to seek to join with other like-minded actors

2.8 Actors - and groups of actors - seek to influence through the employment of various rhetorical strategies

The ideas arising from the themes added to section 2 of this final template are explored in more detail in sections 6.8 and 6.9.

### 6.3 Development of actor worldviews of legitimacy

One of the key findings in the thesis is the development of a typology of thirteen separate actor worldviews of legitimacy and their respective underpinning dominant value sets. In this section, I explore the development of these ideas through the template analysis process.

In the early stages of the analysis process my templates focused on a broad approach to the analysis, relating to ideas complementary to legitimacy such as the normative pressures relating to charging. As these complementary ideas were dropped from the template, I was able to refine my focus on the detail of legitimacy much more. This moved from a focus on just four types of legitimacy under my first template, to an expansion of eleven different areas that may relate to legitimacy in Template 2. In the development between templates 1 and 2, I drew in additional ideas relating to legitimacy as found in the data through my coding against Template 1. At this stage of my analysis, I was only exploring a sub-set of data relating to Parsley CVS, but I was already able to draw in additional examples of actors framing their justifications of their own charging perspectives which allowed for the creation of five additional sub-themes under the legitimacy node in Template 2.

Under ideas relating to innovation as a frame for justifying progressing in the direction of chargeable services, many of my conversations with Karl fell into this category, as exemplified in the research diary extract below:

*"I went for pub lunch with Karl and Elaine today. I think they were relieved to get out of the office. Karl kept talking about how everyone is holding them back and they want to make progress but they can't do so in such a negative environment. Karl sees his role in marketing as really helping Parsley CVS develop into new areas that he can then help sell. I asked him why he is so keen on the idea of progress, I told him that he even says the word progress a lot and that that had struck me, and I asked what progress means to him. He said to me that he felt for any given organisation, there was no value in staying still and that moving things forward was the only way that an organisation could earn and keep some respect. I asked him if there was ever such a thing as progress for progress' sake and he said that no, there wasn't."*

Author's research diaries

I further added four additional themes relating to legitimacy in Template 2. The second additional theme was 'professional', and under this theme I sought information relating to the justification of a particular direction based on the need to be seen to act 'professionally'. A conversation that I noted with Steve, an administrator, captured this:

"Dawn [across the office]: *"What do you think about it then Steve?"*

Steve: *"About what?"*

Dawn: *"This charging business."*

Steve: *"Oh that. Right. We're not ready. It's fine when we're ready but we're not ready now. How can we be ready when we don't even have you know, oh things like our staff having professional qualifications, or a receptionist or a nice office. You can't justify charging people for something if you're not coming over professional like." "*

Author's research diaries - conversation with Steve, Administrator, Parsley  
CVS

I added demand-based legitimacy here also, based on a number of conversations which suggested that if there was not a demand for chargeable support, then it was not justified and therefore not legitimate. This came up in an interview with Kate, a project worker who summarised the principle:

*"I just don't see how it's ok for us to take on this thing of charging just because we want to. Nobody will pay for it and it will fall flat and that will say it all: there's a market isn't there and this isn't something we can sell on the market so I just can't say I feel that good about it. If we need to prop it up because we can't sell it then that's not ok, how can it be legit[sic] to prop something up that nobody wants to pay for."*

Kate, Project Worker, Parsley CVS

I also added a category relating to financial legitimacy, which at this stage was predominantly based on data arising from conversations with Vishal, a senior manager, who argued that:

*"There's no money. We're utterly screwed. You know it, I know it. There's no money at all. So it's not a question of what we do, it's not a question of how do we be nice to our groups. It's a question of how do we put some b\*\*\*\*\* money back into the kitty, and sharpish. That's the only way to see it."*

Vishal, Senior Manager, Parsley CVS

Finally at this stage I added a theme relating to 'practical' legitimacy: information regarding this related to having the skill sets and capacity to deliver successfully and credibly. This first arose in relation to conversations with Sarah, the new marketing assistant at Parsley CVS. In a group meeting to discuss funding, she asked:

*"I'm probably being daft right but who is going to deliver these services? We're talking about all these things we can't do like skills for small business and SROI [Social Return on Investment] and commissioning and the like. We can't do that can we? Who can do that? How can we sell it if we can't do it? Can we sell it? I don't think we can, we'd just be blaggers wouldn't we?"*

Sarah, Marketing Assistant, Parsley CVS

Through the third revision of the template, I sought information that gave additional depth to the categories of legitimacy already built into Template 2. The information I sought here was with a view to joining up ideas of a particular notion of legitimacy in relation to the specific components which may form an individual part of it, so information tended to link to the detailed aspects of how each area of legitimacy played out. For example, financial legitimacy was not only made up of ideas relating to financial pressures as exemplified in the interview with Vishal above, but also of ideas relating to whether groups could pay or not, and references to reserves and the financial situation. At this stage, I did not view any of the themes relating to

legitimacy as worldviews of legitimacy but simply as types of legitimacy which might have specific phenomena attached.

Under Template 3 I also added a theme in relation to ideas of 'relationship-based' legitimacy. At the point I which was analysing the data for the third revision of the template, some data from Thyme CVS had been added to my data set and a number of the actors present at Thyme CVS appeared to be driven by perceptions of external relationships. Information I sought here then linked to how any ideas relating to holding, maintaining, and meeting the expectations of particular relationships shaped views of what is, and what is not, legitimate. This is exemplified below:

*"There's nothing like about what the groups want, ultimately it's not about that, it's about how do we keep our relationships with the movers and the shakers out there, the ones that influence for us, the ones that pay us money, the ones that pat us on the back and say what a good job we do - we need to keep them on board in order to keep going to do the stuff for the groups."*

Charlotte, Volunteer Centre Manager, Thyme CVS

The fourth revision to the template saw little change in legitimacy ideas from the third, although I did seek to draw together ideas of 'technical' and 'professional' legitimacy as I saw strong similarities in the data relating to in the former, technical capacity and systems, and in the latter, professional capacity and reputation.

In the fourth revision of the template my thinking relating to legitimacy still saw each theme relating to legitimacy as a legitimacy 'type' as opposed to a legitimacy 'worldview'. When I refer here to the difference between I perceive between ideas of type as opposed to worldview, ideas around type might imply that there are concrete and definitive categories of legitimacy and that actors may subscribe to any number of them depending on the situation at hand. However, data arising between the development from Template 4 to Template 5 led me to consider the ideas of actor worldviews. This data arose from interview transcripts where certain actors expressed

that they held a particular frame through which to view the legitimacy of moves into charging. After seeing this in the data a small number of times, I looked back through a number of other transcripts in order to establish if that came out elsewhere. I therefore sought to establish whether actors may have a particular frame through which they personally view legitimacy, and that such frames may be personal to particular actors (although they may be replicated across actors). Signals I considered in the data in indicating that an actor may hold a worldview related to points at which actors referred to personal frames through which they view the problem, preferences they held in terms of the criteria by which they judge what is legitimate, or references to their personal character, outlook or values. This notion is demonstrated below:

*"You know me by now though and you know that I say what I think. And I've told you what I think about this, we need to move. I mean, perhaps it's me influencing that. My background you know, you know I worked in a big housing association don't you and... I had to do a lot to drive the membership forward there and I think it affects the way I view things, you become the things you do, everywhere you leave you take a part of it with you and that changes the way you see things doesn't it?"*

Estelle, County Funding Manager, Thyme CVS

Such a move from considering types of legitimacy to considering worldviews was significant in the move to develop Template 5, as it allowed me to explore particular ways in which actors expressed their worldviews, the language used to represent such worldviews and the personal experiences feeding in to informing them. This in turn is picked up through the development of arguments in relation to dominant value sets in Template 6.

Prior to this however, it is worth pausing to consider the thirteen types of legitimacy worldview expressed in Template 5 and the types of data which I was seeking to clarify in respect of each worldview. In relation to the idea of a 'moral' worldview of legitimacy, this category was driven by a number of

actors who appeared to be highly morally driven. I therefore sought data which linked to ideas of morality, ethics and issues of conscience or firmly held principles about the way society should be. The following extract was typical of such data:

*"I've said it before and I'll say it again... You know this just doesn't sit right with my conscience. It's not what I got into the sector for, not at all."*

Oliver, CEO, Rosemary CVS

In relation to political worldviews of legitimacy, this theme was being driven through data relating to a number of actors who accepted and wanted to comply with perceived authority, despite holding a different opinion to those in authority. In short, such compliance appeared through the data to keep the political balance in check. This is exemplified below:

*"I don't want to do it, I don't believe in it, not a jot. I've worked so hard with my groups to get them off the ground and... they'll hate it. I hate it already. But I'm going to do it because you don't mess with the powers that be do you. I'm not like Fred, I'm not a rebel. I don't shout out when I disagree. I do what I'm told if I know what's good for me."*

Nick, Development Worker, Thyme CVS

Ideas of technical legitimacy are already touched on in terms of Template 2, but at this stage of idea development, data relating to a technical worldview of legitimacy took on a character whereby an actor deemed something to be legitimate if the practical and technical capabilities and capacities were held to deliver charging successfully. I was therefore seeking information in this category where actors sought to justify their decisions on chargeable support services in practical terms of concepts such as 'readiness'.

Ideas of a regulative worldview of legitimacy arose from actors who appeared to prioritise legal frameworks above all else in considering which direction was appropriate in relation to charging. Although this category was not demonstrated in vast numbers of actors, in those where it was seen, data in relation to a regulative worldview was strong and seen throughout the

analysis. The types of data I sought in order to firmly establish this category therefore linked to legal documents, sanctions, laws themselves, and the Charity Commission as the regulator. Such a stance is summed up below:

*"If it's ok with you, I need you to check the service level agreements. We can't do anything that is seen to violate them. And then we need to check our own rules as well, not just our constitution but anything else that's legally binding, I don't know, stuff like that Charity Commission, we need to know what's allowed legally and what's not. Not to prevent us from doing it but to make sure we do it right."*

Julia, Finance Manager, Thyme CVS

In relation to an innovative legitimacy worldview, this is touched on above in respect of Template 2 - but in order to develop the idea, I considered data by which there was a clear focus on advancing practice and that valued advancing practice as a goal in itself rather than as a means to an end.

An opportunistic worldview of legitimacy, another category included in Template 5, appears similar at first to innovative legitimacy but is subtly different. Here, I sought data relating to opportunism and filling gaps as they arise. This was informed particularly by many staff members at Thyme CVS who argued that if there was an opportunity to deliver a service and earn money in doing so, it should be taken as if it was not taken by Thyme CVS it would be taken by somebody else. Data relating to this category not only looked at information relating to taking opportunities but also relating to ideas of potential regret in not taking an opportunity.

The idea of 'survival based' legitimacy arises in Template 5 as a modified version of 'financial' legitimacy in earlier templates. The principle of this is very much based in ideas of justifying the direction of an organisation in relation to charging based on the need to survive and that alone. In order to seek understandings relating to a survival based legitimacy therefore, much of the data considered related to perceived urgency in the need to survive, or a perceived lack of resources - which were in turn used as a justification for

any given path which may generate income. This was demonstrated by Karen, the finance manager at Rosemary CVS:

*"Everyone hates me for saying we need to change, we need to charge, we need to look at our hours again or maybe redundancies will come again soon. I know you're only interested in charging but the rest is true too. Everyone hates me for saying it anyway but it's true - I see the figures every day. We need to charge, even if it's really unpopular at first, because if we carry on losing money at this rate this organisation won't exist soon. So we just need to get on and do it, it doesn't matter what anyone thinks if we can't carry on does it?"*

Karen, Finance Manager, Rosemary CVS

The eighth type of legitimacy worldview included in the template was 'stakeholder' legitimacy. This move to include stakeholder legitimacy was a progression from the previous idea of 'relationship-based' legitimacy included in Template 4. Here, I sought to draw together all information relating to actors perceiving what is legitimate through the perceived need to preserve relationships with stakeholders. I therefore sought data relating to actors indicating that certain relationships should be factored into consideration as part of the judgement in charging for services. This is demonstrated below:

*"I do wonder that doing it [charging] in isolation is wrong you know. Taking this step alone. I don't think it's a step that should be taken alone really. I think... I guess I think it's something that is happening to the sector, not just to us. And I think we need to be honest about that and take our stakeholders and our partners with us. I worry about alienating them if we just bulldoze our path right through. I think it's something they could get on board with. And I think those relationships are important to us. So I think it's about thinking, how can we do this and keep the people that are important to us still wanting to have that relationship, still valuing the partnership we have.*

*Be that with our groups or be that with, you know, Rosemary Council or whatever. Anyone. Everyone. It's something we should be doing with our stakeholders on board for sure."*

Ashley, Board Member, Rosemary CVS

This idea of stakeholder based legitimacy is subtly different to 'normative' legitimacy which is picked up later on in the template. The data relating to stakeholder based legitimacy suggested that there were some actors who wished to preserve relationships above all else in order to secure legitimacy, those views appeared to be based upon the value of the relationships themselves. Here, the contrast with a normative worldview of legitimacy is that actors appeared to perceive pressures arising from the institutional environment and it is the perception of such pressures that provided the frame for legitimacy. Data which I deemed to indicate normative legitimacy therefore directly referenced what the broader institutional environment might expect, or what others within the environment were doing, such as in Elaine's case:

*[I was present at a community event with Elaine, attempting to sell consultancy fundraising advice.] "B\*\*\*\*\* Norah I don't know what we're doing today. Do you know what we're doing? Nobody that's coming here wants to buy funding advice from us. Course they don't. You know why we're doing it though don't you. Because it's what we've got to do now... The big wide world says charge so we charge. And we've got to be seen to at least be trying to charge because it's them out there... You know, the funders and the council and that... They've got to see us giving it a go because let's be honest, that's why we're doing it, because it's what we're expected to do. And that's ok to do what you're expected to do... good, even. We wouldn't want the world changing around us and us not responding would we? Where would that lead us?"*

Elaine, Funding Advisor, Parsley CVS

I also picked up on references to what I termed in the template as 'historical' legitimacy, whereby particular actors framed their views through a lens which

privileged the historical development of the institution and the institutional environment. I therefore sought data in this respect which related to ideas and phrases such as 'we've always done it this way' or 'we used to do it like this, but then we stopped because...'. Doreen at Parsley CVS gave frequent and clear indicators in this respect:

*[In conversation with Sarah.] "I don't know why you're talking about doing a survey [to find out what people think about charging]. We know what they think already, we've done surveys before, you just have to dig out the old ones. There's a box over here somewhere..."*

Doreen, CEO, Parsley CVS

In relation to strategic legitimacy, a small number of actors directly appeared to reference pre-agreed strategic documents in relation to their worldview of whether charging was or was not legitimate. To develop this aspect of the framework, I sought data explicitly referencing organisational documents such as strategic frameworks, mission statements, or business plans. The sentiment expressed here was typically 'if it's not in the business plan, we're not doing it'.

The category of 'harmonious' legitimacy developed through data relating to actors across all sites in my data set at this stage who appeared to act as 'peace keepers'. I began to observe through the data that there were a number of actors who appeared to act in this way and therefore to develop this further when coding data alongside the template, I sought data relating to actors who framed their conversations around charging in respect of ideas such as keeping everybody happy, avoiding tensions, or ensuring that the most people possible are satisfied. Roz at Thyme CVS exemplified this:

*"I don't have mega strong feelings either way really - but I can see that some others do. God, you should have heard Nick banging on about it the other day after you'd had your chat with him... You'd have thought the world was going to end! But it's not just him, I know... I think you can deal with a few whingers, and God knows Nick is one, you can deal with a few if you think you're doing the right thing by most of us."*

The final theme included as a worldview of legitimacy in the revision for Template 5 was that of 'pioneering' legitimacy. I viewed this through data where actors felt that leading the sector forwards gave legitimacy to undertaking a new direction or action. Data I used to inform this therefore typically involved ideas around leadership of the sector, being the first to do something, or being pioneering. This is different from innovative legitimacy in that the data sought in relation to innovative worldviews relating to the advancing of progress and practice, whereas this pioneering legitimacy appeared to be based on leadership - of FLOs, of the sector, and of other LIOs. This is demonstrated in my initial conversation with Edward before arriving on site:

*"You know that old 'I have a dream' hoo-hah. Well I do have a dream! I have a dream where we're the first infrastructure organisation to have a full programme of charging for services. I have a dream that where we lead, others follow. I have a dream that it doesn't matter that we're not funded by the Councils anymore because we set the direction and that by going first into this charging, we're leading the way. What do we get with that? It's the principle of monopolies I think. You get to beat away any new entrants. You get to control the market share and defend it easily. You get to be the leader."*

Edward, CEO, Thyme CVS

Through the coding of data against Template 5 in order to generate Template 6, the coding process, which was at this stage focusing on actor worldviews of legitimacy, in turn began to draw out ideas of actors having an underpinning 'dominant value set' which informed their worldview of legitimacy. It is worth noting however that for some actors, it was not a single set of values informing their judgement, but instead were informed through multiple value sets. I hence use the term 'dominant' to attach to ideas of value sets in order to acknowledge this complexity that became apparent in respect of some actors. In turn, I sought to establish the value sets which actors predominantly employed to inform their worldviews of

legitimacy in terms of those which actors provided signals for most frequently, with most strength, and most explicitly. My own definition of a dominant value set is based therefore on what I saw arising through the data.

I define a dominant value set as:

*The values of an actor that shape the way in which they think about their institutional environment more frequently and with more strength than any other values which the actor may also possess.*

The early signals which led to identifying such dominant value sets arose relatively explicitly through the data, with actors often stating very clearly their value sets which informed the ways in which they viewed whether or not they believed charging to be a legitimate course of action. Such data is typified in the following two extracts:

*"I think there is something about the way you view things isn't there, about what's important to you, and it's what makes us different. I'm a business man, I always have been, and even when I fell into the third sector my job roles have been very business oriented...so my values are very much businessy values you know, about things like optimising profits, efficiency, leading the market forward, yes especially that idea of market leadership, I value that highly, I think it's critical for success. So I suppose that you know, it drives the way I see this, in that of course I'm going to think that the only proper course of action is one where we lead this organisation into the market and drive forward a serious programme of making money."*

Bill, Business Development Manager, Sage CVS

*"Oliver: For me I just find myself asking, what did I get into the sector for? The way we're going it just gives me some kind of identity crisis. I'm expected to be the one to get us out of this mess, and we are in a mess let's make no bones about it... But I find increasingly that I just wonder why I'm doing it. Charging isn't in my values. It's not on my moral compass."*

Dawn: *"What is in your values then?"*

Oliver: "*Morality. Helping people. Doing the right thing. This isn't that at all.*" "

Conversation with Oliver, CEO, Rosemary CVS

As the data in terms of value sets appeared to arise often in explicit terms as above, I initially explored this data by mapping actors to whom I had already attached a specific worldview following Template 5 against situations in which they discussed ideas of values, drivers, motivating factors, beliefs or sets of ideas which they valued highly. I then used these ideas to map back into Template 6 value sets against actor worldviews.

Each individual actor worldview appeared to have an associated key driver that arose through the employment of their personal values. These underpinning dominant value sets appear to be intrinsically linked with the particular framing of each respective worldview. Those actors employing a worldview of moral legitimacy, for example, were driven by a strong sense of morality, ethics and fairness, as in the extract relating to Oliver on the previous page. Those employing a worldview of political legitimacy appeared to value compliance with perceived authority. Actors holding technical worldviews of legitimacy valued business as usual and an ability to deliver on day to day practicalities, whilst actors with a regulative worldview perhaps unsurprisingly valued legal frameworks and contractual commitments highly. Actors with an innovative legitimacy worldview valued advancing practice, whilst actors with a pioneering worldview of legitimacy valued sector leadership. Actors with opportunistic worldviews of legitimacy valued taking chances to move into gaps as they arise; those with a survival based worldview were driven by value sets relating to financial stability, and those with a historical worldview of legitimacy valued internal norms and routines. For actors holding a stakeholder legitimacy worldview, they valued relationships, and in a complementary but distinct dominant value set, those actors with a harmonious worldview of legitimacy valued unanimity. Finally, those with a strategic worldview valued *a priori* commitments to plans and

strategies, and actors with a normative worldview valued the perceptions of the institutional environment external to the organisation.

Each of these ideas will be explored, alongside their respective worldviews of legitimacy, in section 6.4. Beyond this, in section 6.5 I explore the development of analysis in relation to rhetorical strategies used to further actor worldviews of legitimacy.

#### 6.4 Actor worldviews of legitimacy

The first key finding arising from my research is a typology of thirteen different actor types according to their worldviews of legitimacy, and the dominant value sets underpinning them. For ease of reference, I use the term 'worldview of legitimacy', a phrase which I have coined through the process of analysis and defined in section 1.2, to mean:

*An idealistic conception in the mind of an actor about the way an institutional system within which an actor is a part, i.e. the actor's 'world', should be, in order to gain legitimacy and hence justify to themselves, a peer, or a superordinate system their right for the organisation to exist, act, or follow a particular strategic direction.*

Where I refer to legitimacy within this definition, I again use the same definition established in Chapter 1.2, which extends Maurer's (1971, p361) definition of legitimacy to become:

*The process whereby an organisation justifies to a peer or superordinate system its right to exist, act, or follow a particular strategic direction.*

Further, where I refer to the word 'actor', I again draw on the definition I established in section 1.2:

*A person operating within a particular institutional environment - including within a specific organisation as an institution in its own right - who to some extent is shaped by the narratives present within the institutional environment of which they are a part.*

In terms of defining dominant value sets, I have set out a definition for this in the previous section.

Having undergone the process of template analysis set out in Chapter 4 and section 6.2, I identified thirteen different legitimacy worldviews, each associated with individual actor perceptions of what is and what is not legitimate in relation to chargeable support services. I further identified the dominant value sets associated with particular worldviews of legitimacy. The development of these ideas through the analysis process is set out in section 6.3, particularly with reference to the development of Template 5.

Collectively, these legitimacy worldviews and underpinning dominant value sets are presented below in Table 6A, before being examined in more detail in the text that follows (sections 6.4.1 to 6.4.13).

**Table 6A: thirteen actor worldviews of legitimacy and their underpinning dominant value sets**

| Type of legitimacy     | Underpinning dominant value set   |
|------------------------|---|
| Historical legitimacy  | Internal norms and routines and their historical development over time                      |
| Moral legitimacy       | Strong moral compass, ideologically driven  |
| Regulative legitimacy  | Legal frameworks, governing documents, contractual commitments                              |
| Political legitimacy   | Compliance with perceived authority; sensitivity to 'internal politics'                     |
| Strategic legitimacy   | Sticking to a plan; strategic frameworks and documents                                      |
| Harmonious legitimacy  | Moves away from conflicting narratives; harmony   |
| Technical legitimacy   | Practicality, business as usual, things being seen to run smoothly, systems and processes   |
| Stakeholder legitimacy | Stakeholder relationships   |
| Normative legitimacy   | Reputation; external perceptions of organisation arising from the institutional environment |

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Survival-based legitimacy | Financial stability  |
| Opportunistic legitimacy  | Taking new opportunities as they arise; filling 'gaps'; gradual change |
| Pioneering legitimacy     | Leading the sector / industry into new directions and markets          |
| Innovative legitimacy     | Progress; advancing practice   |

#### 6.4.1 Historical legitimacy

The first type of legitimacy arising from the research is the idea of 'historical legitimacy', whereby an actor perceives legitimacy through that which is consistent with the historical norms and values developed over time within the organisation. Here, much weight is given to internal culture and values developed over time, with ideas and actions that fall outside of the organisation's history being viewed by actors with this worldview as illegitimate, as demonstrated below:

*"So it's this, isn't it. This is why I'm annoyed. Because I've worked here for thirteen years now and I'm reluctant to try and change things because we've done it in the past. I guess because of staff turnover and whatever, the organisation loses knowledge when people leave, and I know I'm a grumbler but I just want to scream at the newer people 'we already know the answer!'. Things evolve for a reason, and you try things, and some of them work, and some of them don't, and the ones that don't you discard and the ones that do you move on. So it feels so frustrating that we're coming back to investing all of this effort in setting up the trading company again, and I know Bill is passionate about it, but we tried it already, less than ten years ago, and it failed, so why would it work now? It's about learning from what we've done, from our mistakes... and from our successes too I suppose."*

Donna, Volunteer Centre Manager, Sage CVS

Accordingly, the dominant value set underpinning this type of legitimacy surrounds the need to subscribe to, respect and follow internal culture and norms that have evolved over time:

*"I've been on this board longer than some of my grandchildren have been alive, hell, maybe even my children! And you learn in that time, when to challenge and when not to... You learn respect for the history and traditions of the place, you learn the way the culture works, how things fit together, and that history is really important in making what you do today work and fit together nicely."*

Joe, Board Member, Parsley CVS

Actors subscribing to historical legitimacy worldviews strongly identify with historic norms, rules and routines within their organisation - which is treated by these actors as having followed a deliberate path of historical development, as seen in both the quotes above from Joe and Donna. The organisation is viewed by these actors as having evolved over time into its present day form, with said evolution being an important part of the basis for legitimacy.

Two central arguments position the narratives employed by those actors identifying with this particular worldview of legitimacy. The first centres around ideas of 'we've been here before and already know what our position is, we should respect that decisions that have already gone before us have led us to where we are today, and were taken for a reason'. These too are demonstrated in the extracts above. The second argument links to the actors' own history with and knowledge of the organisation: the actors subscribing to this worldview of legitimacy tended to have a long tenure within their respective LIO and hence place particular weight on their role own within its historic development. This is best exemplified by Doreen, CEO of Parsley CVS:

*"No messing with you Dawn, I don't want to disrespect the ideas that Karl's working on, or Elaine is working on, or Neil is working on, it's just... I've been here 25 years of my life; that's nearly all of your life,*

*imagine that. But what it means is, after that long, this place is your lifeblood and you just know instinctively what is right for it and what isn't."*

Doreen, CEO, Parsley CVS

Actors identifying with a historical legitimacy worldview tended to be working in roles of authority such as senior management, chief officers, or role holding board members such as Chair or Treasurer. The strongest examples of this actor type taken from the ethnography include Doreen, the CEO of Parsley CVS, Donna, the Volunteer Centre Manager at Sage CVS, and Tessa, the Chair of Trustees at Parsley CVS.

Unlike the other worldviews of legitimacy outlined later, historical legitimacy did not feature as heavily within LIOs other than Parsley CVS, but it is likely that this was because other LIOs had much higher staff turnover, whereas at Parsley CVS the majority of the staff had been in place for over ten years and hence had stronger historical links with the organisation.

In short, the typically long tenures of actors expressing a historical legitimacy view meant they had a strong understanding of the development of internal culture, norms and routines and were able to easily argue that 'we've always done it this way'. This is exemplified in the passage below:

*"...Not all these fancy notions, not credit unions which Karl is fascinated with, or not debt relief that Karl is also fascinated with. [They're] all very interesting but it's not what Parsley CVS is here to do. In my opinion, too many LIOs in Parsleyshire are running laundrettes and all sorts of things. I just want Parsley CVS to help the groups, and having asked groups every year for twenty years what they want, they always say 'funding please'... Anything else to me is a waste of s\*\*\*\*\* time. I know that because I've done it, I've asked them, year after year. And I'll tell the staff that."*

Doreen, CEO, Parsley CVS

*quite strongly, that there was work to be done with people that really needed help, help from people that had a set of skills to offer like I did. And although things have changed in the sector, I still believe that to be the case. I still believe that people need help - and I don't think there's any way that I can square with myself being the one to charge them for those things they need help with, when if it was something they could pay for well... well they wouldn't be coming to me for funding advice would they?"*

Christopher, Funding Advisor, Parsley CVS

Actors subscribing to this worldview of legitimacy held a dominant value set associated with being highly ideologically driven, and they would typically say things such as 'I don't think this is fair or right'. This is elaborated on below in an example taken from Oliver, the CEO of Rosemary CVS.

*"That is what I want to underline, that we work with the members and have done for years. It's important to remember that, that in amongst all of this protecting our own backs, are the groups that really need our help. We can't forget about them, we can't go all out there charging in looking for profit, because it's not right. I know that times have changed and I know we live in this capitalist world now where the voluntary sector deliver public services, and where we're expected to be professional, but I got into this sector in the late seventies or maybe early eighties, and it was so different then, you did it because you cared about the people... We can't forget them in amongst all of this selfish drive for self-preservation, just to keep the cash rolling in. We can't forget our principles."*

Oliver, CEO, Rosemary CVS

The above quotation demonstrates the highly ideologically driven character of actors taking moral legitimacy as their worldview, in turn demonstrating the strong moral compass and ideologies that underpin this worldview as a dominant value set.

As with those subscribing to historical legitimacy, actors viewing legitimacy through a moral worldview are likely to be averse to moves into charging, although under this worldview it is as a consequence of their morals and principles, and a belief that the voluntary sector is there to help those worst off and therefore charging may not be appropriate. However, some actors with this view may still have a sense of pragmatism and concede that charging is necessary: where this is the case, they advocate a charging model that has the lowest impact on the LIO's beneficiaries, such as a small fee for membership or for a newsletter. Here, this is demonstrated by Maggie, a development worker at Rosemary CVS:

*"Thing is, I know it's not what we should be doing. I know it's not ethical or fair or right. And I think that's what keeps me up at night thinking about it, knowing that it just feels, unjust I suppose, to be asking for money from these groups that are doing the harshest of things with the most needy of people. And if you'd met some of my groups, you'd see they really are deserving. But I suppose I also know that because they are deserving, they are deserving of having some kind of service altogether, they wouldn't get that if we went under so I guess it's about thinking, as much as I hate it and I think it's unfair, how can we charge them just a small fee, the minimum we can get away with really. I think it's probably an annual membership fee and then let them still access us for free but it hurts even doing that.*

Maggie, Development Worker, Rosemary CVS

#### 6.4.3 Regulative legitimacy

A worldview of 'regulative legitimacy' is perhaps best exemplified by Faye, the funding advisor at Rosemary CVS, who in the midst of discussions about charging for services would frequently refer back to the constitution, question whether decisions should be run by members at the AGM, and consider the legal implications of decisions. Faye was also one of the only people across the all four ethnographic sites who responded positively to my probing around the public benefit requirement in charity law; it bothered her that there

may be a conflict between Rosemary CVS' actions and the legislation that governed over its very existence as a CVS. Regulative legitimacy is exemplified by Faye below:

*"I'm not legally qualified but I know a jolly lot about the constitutions and all the rest of it, it's something that I do several times a year. Erm, and you know perhaps the person I do that with, actually they are really keen, maybe there's one person on their own who comes in with an initiative for a social enterprise, but it's ultimately going to provide them with a job and a few other people but they are driven to do it. They might not pay a lot but they might pay £30 or £50 and sometimes you think that much isn't going to be a lot but it's something towards my time and I might spend more than £50 worth of time with them all of it, certainly spend more than £50 worth of time with them talking about it. I had a guy come in and we did a co-operative legal structure and at the end he said, who do I pay, where's the bill? But most of these people are members and if they're members we can't give them a bill, because we need to take it to the AGM and ask for their agreement, but because it's a membership organisation they won't agree, they'll want what's in their interests, they won't want to pay £50 to fund my time."*

Faye, Funding Advisor, Rosemary CVS

At the heart of Faye's regulative legitimacy worldview was the idea that decisions must be in line with the reason for the organisation's existence, and although she personally believed in charging for services, she often could not align her own belief in charging for services with the principles enshrined in Rosemary CVS' constitution, or their functioning as a membership organisation. Whenever this was the case, she turned to various regulative documents to help guide her judgement, be that the constitution or charity law itself. Faye would often put aside her own beliefs to argue for the principles enshrined in regulation, as below:

*"Who cares what I think? It's not what I think that matters. It's the things that are written in our constitutions, the very powers that we have to exist in the first place."*

Under this worldview of legitimacy, actors possess a dominant value set that places a high weighting on legal frameworks and commitments in terms of framing their beliefs and cognition. An actor with this worldview for instance may be likely to say 'check the contract before we do anything' – with reference to service level agreements and other obligations that LIOs have in place with some local government funders - or 'are we constituted to do this?' This is demonstrated below:

*"I just wonder you know, that you can't go rushing into all of this without learning about more about what are the legal implications of it all. About what are... Ok so let me think. There's rules on charity trading isn't there? With the Charity Commission? Is it in the Charities Act? I think so. So that's one. And then, what about all our service level agreements and our funding contracts that we've signed, what if we're contravening them? And then beyond that, what about all the stuff to do with what our members subscribe to? Do they sign a contract with us when they sign up for their membership? These are all worries to me, they're all things I think - God, we can't just charge off and do it, we might be breaking the law."*

Roberta, Development Team Manager, Sage CVS

As such, actors view legitimacy through legal and regulative requirements and frameworks, in strong parallels to traditional views of institutional legitimacy (Parsons, 1960; Weber, 1924/1968) and in line with latter formations of regulative legitimacy (Scott, 1995; Deephouse, 1996). As was played out frequently in the narratives expressed by both Faye at Parsley CVS and Roberta at Sage CVS, their perceptions were that changing the organisation without considering the legal frameworks by which it exists would not be legitimate.

#### 6.4.4 Political legitimacy

Actors with worldviews of legitimacy based on the idea of 'political legitimacy' follow a narrative whereby they do not tend to agree with the institutional change being undertaken, but given their acceptance of perceived authority from above, they are willing to go along with it anyway. This is demonstrated in the two extracts below:

*"I'm just not one to raise it though, that's not me. I think they know I don't like it, Oliver and Cora, I think they can tell from the look on my face when we talk about these things, I probably huff and puff a bit without thinking about it, but I'm not going to argue with them about it because it's not my place to. It's not for me to upset the political balance, I'll let the powers that be sort that out amongst themselves."*

Katie, Administrator, Rosemary CVS

*"Debbie: "Ultimately what it comes down to is that you don't want to rock that apple cart. Things kick off around here from time to time and actually, most of the time we're quite a gelled organisation but when we're not, it's just not worth being caught up in the politics of it all, I'd rather keep schtum and ride out the storm..."*

*Dawn: "What drives you? To stay quiet I mean. Why don't you challenge it if you really believe we shouldn't be doing it?"*

*Debbie: "The politics and all that, I just want to make sure we keep on top of all that. I really... I guess I really attach quite a high worth to having the internal politics here being good and not messy because things are better for everyone when they're good."*

Debbie, Development Worker, Sage CVS

In terms of the dominant value set that frames this narrative, actors with this worldview accept perceived authority and favour an easy time. This in turn affects their view of what is legitimate: these actors will base their legitimacy judgements on what is internally seen as politically 'easy', where 'politically' specifically refers here to internal politics.

Debbie at Sage CVS did not agree with charging, but her line manager and her CEO did and therefore she saw it as easier to go along with it. This position was shared by John, a board member at Parsley CVS, and a number of others across the four sites. Debbie went along with charging conversations, whilst having informal conversations expressing her dissent - and this was also typical of actors with such a worldview. This is demonstrated in the extract below, which was in conversation with a number of colleagues in the development team office:

*"I don't like any of this, this charging business... But what can you do? You can't really change it. Roberta thinks it's important, Kelly thinks it's important, as if they're going to sit up and listen when I say 'thanks but no thanks'. And you can't really do anything about it to make a stand other than leave, and I can't really leave, because I like my job, and I need the job security that goes with it... So you just put up and shut up, but I think about my groups, especially the ones I've spent really loads of time with, and I think back to the beginning and know they wouldn't have become what they are today if they'd had to buy my time, because they couldn't have afforded all the time I've put into them... So Roberta says, well maybe we subsidise those groups, but that's not the point, the point is that it's wrong altogether, but if the management say it's so then it's so."*

Debbie, Development Worker, Sage CVS

The extract above from Debbie is typical of conversations Debbie would have on a daily basis with many different workers, in an apparent attempt to get others on board with a quietly dissenting narrative, despite being seen outwardly to comply with the direction being taken within the organisation. This was also seen with other actors with a similar worldview at other sites - below is another extract from a conversation with office colleagues led by Emma, a funding advisor at Thyme CVS.

*"Emma: "I hate all this talk of charging. Do you hate charging too Nick?"*

Nick: [Looks passive.] *"Wow, where did that come from?"*

Emma: *"I was just thinking about it after we all had that meeting. Sorry Dawn, please don't be offended but I do. It's not really okay to our groups is it?"*

Nick: *"If you feel that strongly, tell someone. Edward or Connie or someone."*

Emma: *"No, I think I'll just sit here and grumble about it. Far be it for me to be the one to decide... It's not my business. Doesn't stop me hating it though."*

Conversation with Emma, Funding Advisor, and Nick, Development Worker,  
Thyme CVS

#### 6.4.5 Strategic legitimacy

Actors valuing strategic legitimacy are more neutral in their approach to institutional change than the four prior actor types, although their specific position depends on the positions outlined in the organisation's strategic plan and related documents such as mission statements. This is best exemplified by Neville, the Chair of the Thyme CVS' board, in the statement below:

*"Well, let's be frank. Charging isn't in the strategic plan. And if it isn't in the strategic plan then we don't do it. But at the same time, I think there's a little bit of vaguery in the strategic plan, it's deliberately loose such that it allows us to take opportunities when they present themselves. It took a while for the board to produce and it talks about social enterprise in quite loose terms, but it doesn't talk about charging for the things we provide as core. So I suppose then I ask, what are the circumstances under which we would charge? And there are already two circumstances under which the organisation will be directly involved with charging, but both of those are in the strategic plan."*

In terms of how this translates into a dominant value set, actors with this particular worldview of legitimacy tend to favour planning and strategy: they are people that believe in devising and following strategic documents to the letter. This is also demonstrated below:

*"You know what I'm not comfortable about?... That we're doing this in the wrong order. We shouldn't be going 'oh, there's a hole we need to decide how we're going to react, that's not good governance being reactive. We should be saying proactively, this is where we want Rosemary CVS to be in five years time, and here is our plan for how to get there. And then following that plan. We do have a strategic plan but for one reason or another none of my fellow board members seem to value it. What is the point in a plan if you don't stick to it I wonder. I'm not sure there is a point - so we should be doing exactly that."*

Ned, Treasurer, Rosemary CVS

This translates directly into a view of legitimacy that deems 'if it's not in the plan, we don't do it' – as such, viewing any activity that falls outside of the strategic plan as illegitimate. This type of 'strategic legitimacy' is a new contribution to the field of legitimacy and offers scope for further exploration: this will be picked up in Chapter 7.

Translating such a worldview of legitimacy into a position on charging, actors possessing this worldview of legitimacy appear value neutral: they do not agree with or disagree with charging per se; rather, their views are dictated by the planning and governance processes within their organisation. As such, some LIOs may find they have actors falling within this worldview who favour charging, as their planning process has favoured charging, whilst other LIOs may have actors falling within this particular worldview who do not favour charging, because their planning process has not done so either.

#### 6.4.6 Harmonious legitimacy

Much like those actors who favour strategic planning as part of their worldview of legitimacy, those who favour 'harmonious' legitimacy are also value neutral with respect to their position on charging for support services, but with that value neutral approach being derived from a very different dominant value set. Whilst the approach of those which favour strategic legitimacy is one of favouring the logic of planning and in turn falling in line with plans that have been put into place *a priori*, the approach of actors who favour harmonious legitimacy is one that stems from their desire to neutralise conflict and seek unanimity, as below:

*"I guess if you're really asking me, and I don't think I have strong opinions on it, but I guess I would say that the best outcome, the best... solution, if you will, is one that everyone buys into. That's the most right, the most proper, the way to know it's the thing we should be doing. I also think that's because you need strong support from across the organisation in order to get it moving forward, so whatever makes the most people happy is therefore the most comfortable. And if it's comfortable for people, it's got to be the right way forward."*

Rachel, Project Worker, Rosemary CVS

Actors with a harmonious worldview in turn hold a dominant value set that favours explicitly moves away from positions of conflict; one in which organisational harmony is favoured, and the legitimacy they seek is based on consensus: again, this is demonstrated below:

*"More than anything I want us to agree. I'm sick of all the arguing about it. It's upsetting too many people. We need to find a way forward where everybody finds a common working ground, something we can all say together that yes we believe in, and go from there."*

Paul, Board Member, Sage CVS

In short, that option or direction which appears to benefit the largest number is that which is favoured under this worldview of legitimacy. These behaviours are observed in actors such as Neil at Parsley CVS, and Roz at

Thyme CVS, and are demonstrated in Roz's quote below, with respect to involving external stakeholders:

*"They've all been so negative. I don't want us to make things difficult but I don't think there's much value in considering taking this step in partnership given how difficult they've made partnership working up until now, we need to do this in unison or not at all. I don't think this is about throwing our toys out the pram and saying we'll just go it alone, I think we need to move ahead probably but I just don't think we should do it without everyone else on board with it."*

In another conversation, Roz commented:

*"I think there'd be resentment against paying for [services] if they knew we got funding from another source to deliver what we deliver to them... I think to be honest, it's easier to deal with charging things to a different sector. I don't think we want to do anything that doesn't sit quite right, that doesn't go down easily. We don't want a drama do we?"*

Roz, Administrator, Thyme CVS

In these extracts, Roz's dominant value set around promoting harmony and moving away from conflicting logics is evident. This translates into a similar picture when addressing legitimacy: this actor type's worldview of legitimacy is viewed primarily through principles of unanimity. The principle here is that without unanimous buy in, action is not legitimate.

This attitude manifests itself in the chargeable services dilemma by making an actor with this worldview relatively passive towards charging for services; they would much prefer to carry on with the job tasks they've always done than get involved in debates where the people around them don't agree.

#### 6.4.7 Technical legitimacy

The term 'technical legitimacy' is used to refer to ideas surrounding processes, technologies, systems, capabilities, efficiency and organisational 'readiness'. Actors with a worldview that favours technical legitimacy would believe that a situation which provided legitimacy was one in which the proper processes and systems were in place before moving ahead, as exemplified below in an extract taken from a development team meeting at Sage CVS in respect of chargeable services:

*"Right. So. It strikes me that it's less about if we can charge and more about how we can charge. I sort of feel like if we can get the how right, then the if doesn't matter and it will sort itself out. So I think it's about sorting us out a system that actually works, about making sure that we would be practically ready to do that in every way possible, from thinking about the payment systems that groups use to thinking about the design of their membership services. Things like should they be able to buy vouchers from us that they can then claim at any time? Things like do we do bundles of services all bunched in together so you're throwing in some extra stuff that they probably need. Things even about how do we get it on our website so that they could pay online. It is about thinking, ok, charging is alright if we can make it feasible and practical, and if it's feasible you can go with it. I think conversely... if organisationally we can't make ourselves ready, then it's not right."*

Joanna, Development Worker, Sage CVS

Actors with this worldview of legitimacy are concerned less about the direction taken under a chargeable model and more about getting the right structures in place to allow any transition to happen effectively.

As applied to a wider population than simply LIOs facing charging situations, this worldview of legitimacy is one that would see an actor less concerned with the ideology and values of any institutional shifts surrounding their day to day operation, and more concerned with the practical implications of such a shift. This worldview of legitimacy was present in a number of actors

across the four ethnographic sites, including Estelle, the county funding manager at Thyme CVS, Steve, the administrator at Parsley CVS, and Karen, the finance manager at Rosemary CVS.

The dominant value set favoured by this actor type is that of the organisation running smoothly; that of business as usual. This is seen in an extract from Steve, an administrator at Parsley CVS:

*"I don't really care about charging one way or the other to be honest with you. I'm not paid enough to care about it. [Laughs.] But I do want to make sure things go smoothly with it, and at the moment that's not happening. It's not happening because we started doing things before we were ready, so we have this Customer Relationship Management system and we paid about seven grand for it or something, I don't know, it was a lot, but despite having all these fancy systems in place, people are coming in and saying to me, can you invoice me, and I can't invoice them because none of us know how to use the system. So we should have had that in place first. And also, we want to sell to people and we've got all these long lists in lots of places of people we could sell to, but why didn't we compile them into one list on the system and then call them in a targeted way. We can't get the charging right until we've got all the internal nuts and bolts right, we can't."*

Steve, administrator, Parsley CVS

It is clear from the statement above that Steve's values and beliefs are based around the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation before any value based judgement on charging for services. This translates to a legitimacy view based on being efficient and effective: a view of legitimacy that dictates that an action is not legitimate if it is flawed by virtue of having inappropriate or inadequate systems, technology or efficiencies in place to support any potential moves or changes.

As with a number of other actors and their world views, this translates into a value neutral world view that does not explicitly favour charging or not charging, but only favours charging if the technical conditions are fulfilled in order to do so.

#### 6.4.8 Stakeholder-based legitimacy

Actors with stakeholder-based legitimacy worldviews place a high value on stakeholders and partnerships. This was most clearly exemplified in the ethnography by Kelly, the CEO at Sage CVS, and Harriet, the treasurer at Parsley CVS. Their dominant value sets were both driven by relationships, as appears to be typical of actors possessing this worldview of legitimacy. This is highlighted by Kelly, the CEO of Sage CVS, at the commencement of my fieldwork with Sage CVS:

*"I think the best thing for you to do is to go out and talk with some of the people this is going to affect most. We know we want to do it but how would it be received? We need to talk to funders, our partners, the councillors, groups... We can't really move until we've consulted with them, as it's the community we're here for".*

Kelly, CEO, Sage CVS

Actors valuing stakeholder-based legitimacy deem that if change is to happen, then all stakeholders should be happy with any potential change before it goes ahead, and it should go ahead so in a collaborative way and it is these conditions that would deem a change to be legitimate. This is demonstrated below in an extract from an interview with Harriet of Parsley CVS:

*"Harriet: "You've seen the money, I've seen the money. We know we've got to charge. So the question is, what makes it alright for us to do so? What makes it fair, right, reasonable?"*

*Dawn: "And what does make it any of those things?"*

Harriet: *"Having everybody on board with us, that's what. Taking them with us from the beginning. Communicating what we're doing and why we're doing it. Explaining to them at length even when they're unhappy and impatient. Because more than anything those relationships that we have, they're what make us a legitimate and viable organisation. So we need to keep them intact and anything that doesn't do so is a move that I don't think we could justify to ourselves. There needs to be a lot of effort goes into those relationships, from right now, if we have any chance of keeping that... credibility that we have as an organisation."*

Conversation with Harriet, Treasurer, Parsley CVS

Such stakeholder based legitimacy therefore translates to ideas of change driven by stakeholder agreement, with those stakeholders whose relationships are valued predominantly being external to the organisation. If stakeholders concede the change, it is seen as legitimate whereas if they disapprove then this actor type would return to the drawing board to seek an alternative solution.

#### *6.4.9 Normative legitimacy*

A normative worldview of legitimacy is driven through actors' dominant value sets of relating to being reputation conscious and to valuing the perceptions arising from the institutional environment. Consideration of actions that were and were not legitimate was based on internal perceptions of the normative pressures present within the organisational field surrounding the LIO. This is subtly different to actors with a stakeholder-based worldview of legitimacy, in that actors with a normative worldview of legitimacy did not necessarily seek to consult with or collaborate with stakeholders, yet were still responsive to the perceived pressures that they deemed were being placed on the LIO by external stakeholders and other bodies within the organisational field. This is demonstrated below in an extract from an interview with Rob, a board member at Sage CVS:

*"Doesn't it just feel like the world is moving on to you? Like if we don't move with it then there'll be trouble? I think it's that sense of... People in the sector are looking to us CVS' now and saying: 'it's your turn'. And when I say that, I suppose I mean that they want us to go, to charge that is. I'm not sure why they want it but you hear it a lot, the Big Lottery are talking about it, this Civil Society consultation, it's on everyone's agendas I think. So the question is, if everyone is asking us to do it and we resist, where does that leave us? I say if the world around us is moving, and wanting us to move with it, we move with it."*

Rob, Board Member, Sage CVS

The dominant drivers in this actor's value set are, therefore, the pressures perceived by them to be placed from the institutional environment onto both the organisation and the actors themselves as individuals, and the need to conform to these perceived pressures.

In the ethnography, these normative pressures often led to ideas of what was and was not acceptable to be seen to do, despite a lack of consultation with external bodies within the organisational field, based on the perceptions of what those bodies in the external environment were said to expect of the respective LIO. This is seen below in the extract from a conversation with Elaine at Parsley CVS, who perceived particular values about how Parsley CVS should behave:

*"And here I am, peddling a leaflet that's asking people to pay me for funding advice, but it's a leaflet created in Microsoft b\*\*\*\*\* Paint or something, so how will anyone take us seriously? People won't buy our services, and funders will think we're being unprofessional so they'll deny us funding too, which is why we shouldn't be doing this."*

[I asked Elaine who had told her they Parsley CVS were unprofessional, or that they wouldn't buy Parsley CVS' services.]

*"I don't b\*\*\*\*\* know do I, don't think anyone has told me directly but it's obvious. I don't need them to tell me to know what they expect of me."*

Conversation with Elaine, Funding Advisor, Parsley CVS - recorded in author  
research diaries

#### 6.4.10 Survival based legitimacy

Survival based legitimacy provides a worldview whereby financial survival at all costs is deemed to be the only legitimate outcome, and it is the need to be financially sustainable which informs this actor group's dominant value set. Actors fitting within this worldview of legitimacy included both Teresa and Vishal of Parsley CVS, Barbara of Sage CVS and Cora of Rosemary CVS.

Considerations surrounding legitimacy here are that action is justified if it will guarantee survival. Such a 'survival at all costs' attitude is typified by Teresa in the extract below:

*"Well, even if it is labour intensive, I think the thing is, we're getting to the point where we'll do anything, we'll charge for anything, we just need to make money, that's the important bit. If we don't make money, we're not here as an organisation in a year's time, so even the stuff that doesn't fit originally with our value set – the things I was talking to you about selling to SMEs in the private sector – we need to be doing stuff like that because otherwise we're kaput."*

Teresa, Development Worker, Parsley CVS

The fight for survival is reflected throughout the language used by this actor type. Such actors will view any option which preserves the organisation as a legitimate one. This is demonstrated below in an extract from Cora:

*"I see these fundings [sic] positively but to function as we currently function without achieving some more money we won't be here as an organisation in five years' time... We will be doing a fade out scenario so however much we feel positive, this is just me speaking now, erm,*

*we haven't got five years in front of us where we continue to deliver the same, so I feel quite determined that we either make a change in what we are doing now, to whatever it is that makes us money, wherever that takes us... or we accept that... we won't be able to function."*

Cora, Chair of Trustees, Rosemary CVS

As translated to a charging approach, this means that actors possessing this worldview of legitimacy tended to be in favour of charging, even if they acknowledged that such a favouring of charging was only out of necessity as opposed to desirability. Vishal states below:

*"I don't think anyone in this place wants us to charge and I certainly don't. I suppose the burden of being a senior manager is that you have to take responsible decisions though and not always popular decisions. I think charging is the only way we can continue to keep ourselves in business, quite frankly, so who cares if I don't like it? We've got to do it anyway."*

Vishal, Senior Manager, Parsley CVS

#### 6.4.11 Opportunistic legitimacy

The notion of opportunistic legitimacy sits alongside this value set in that a path is seen as legitimate if it presents a potential opportunity for the organisation, as seen below:

*"Rebecca: "Sometimes surely it's just about, if something's ripe for the picking well then... pick it? You'd be daft not to? The project I'm working on at the moment came about because of that - I saw an opportunity for some funding and I told Oliver we should go for it and... honestly he was reluctant but I really believe that if there's an opportunity for you to move into something, do something new, make a bit of money hopefully, then you should do it."*

*Dawn: "Do you always think you should do it? Are there any circumstances when you shouldn't?"*

Rebecca: *"Yes always. I think filling those opportunities when they arise, I think they are the things that create the gradual evolution of the organisation you know, I think they're very beneficial, and so I always consider our decisions in those terms on the basis of... does this help us broaden our horizons, move on, expand, meet a demand that was unmet before? Are people asking for it? Do they want it? If they do, we should do it. I think if there's a demand for something then it's the right thing to do that you provide for it, if you can." "*

Conversation with Rebecca, Project Worker, Rosemary CVS

Such an opportunistic approach to viewing legitimacy is arguably best demonstrated by Connie, the Deputy CEO of Thyme CVS, whose pursuit of chargeable services saw her pioneering moves to charge public sector agents such as police and crime commissioners, who sought information on the voluntary sector from Thyme CVS. The extract below is taken from a conversation with Connie in her office:

*"I think this is an amazing opportunity, you coming. You can speak to staff and find out what they're asked for. I think a lot of the time they're asked for stuff – services, advice, mentoring, whatever, and they just deliver it. They don't even see it as an opportunity to charge, they don't think about it, but they should. Every time we have an opportunity to charge we should be charging. Some of the things we do... we give so much information to our partners for free, for instance, we could be charging them thousands."*

Connie, Deputy CEO, Thyme CVS

The dominant value sets underpinning such worldviews of opportunistic legitimacy are those of ideas relating to meeting un-met demand or need, building gradual change, and taking opportunities as they arise. These actors are keen to give new ideas a try even if they had not ever previously anticipated them. Again, this is demonstrated below in a conversation with a board member for Sage CVS:

"Dawn: *"What drives you? What is important to you I suppose I mean, in helping you choose what is right for Sage CVS?"*

Joan: *"As a board or as a person?"*

Dawn: *"As a person."*

Joan: *"I think a lot of it is... I think we as board members have a responsibility to drive the organisation forwards and not let it stagnate. And I think that is why I got involved with being a board member at all, because those are my values, bringing things forward, helping create new opportunities you know, looking at where next and how we can move into areas we've not gone before and develop ourselves bit by bit, taking on those risks and chances when things crop up, you know, when things crop up you take them don't you, that's important, but with the reward in mind, that in jumping into those opportunities with eyes wide shut, you reap rewards I think."*

Joan, Board Member, Sage CVS

#### 6.4.12 Pioneering legitimacy

Actors whose worldview of legitimacy is 'pioneering' employ a dominant value set that prioritises the need for their organisation to be leading a sector or industry. This is typified by the comments below from Bill, the development manager at Sage CVS:

*"So, the thing about going first is, we should do the segmentation. We should pick two or three key segments, which we know are going to be big growers and we should target those, specifically to increase our membership... And effectively what you are doing is replacing your Council funding with your three big segments. That will... send out the right message, because the other problem with not going first is that the first movers, who can spot the right part of the market and get in*

*there first, will dominate the market. And everyone else will get...*

*They've got no chance."*

Bill, Business Development Manager, Sage CVS

As can be seen in Bill's comments, actors with 'pioneering' worldviews of legitimacy value highly the concept of being 'the first mover', and being seen externally to be a leader amongst a group of similar organisations.

The values inherent in wanting to lead the sector into something new result in a legitimacy frame that views pioneering activity as legitimate in its own right, regardless of for instance, fit with the overall strategic direction of the organisation. This is highlighted below by Linda, a board member at Rosemary CVS:

*"If the question is, 'is it right?', well my answer to you is that it has to be right if it gets us up there as number one. Nobody is doing this stuff yet in our area, I know we talked about some others doing it down South but round here, nobody is doing this stuff. Of course we should be the first, why are we here if not to provide leadership to the sector? We're a CVS, we're here to lead!"*

Linda, Board Member, Rosemary CVS

The idea of pioneering legitimacy is different to opportunistic legitimacy in that opportunistic legitimacy is reactive to the institutional environment of which it is a part: if an opportunity arises, an actor with an opportunist worldview would believe that filling it was a legitimate response in its own right as it furthers the growth of the organisation and meets a need or a demand. However, with actors who possess pioneering worldviews of legitimacy, their approach is very much more proactive, as demonstrated below, again by Bill:

*"The thing is, we've been planning for this for a very long time. In some shape or form we've been planning it since the last trading company had to stop trading. The market conditions weren't right but we were thinking about well what exactly is it that we do next, how do we resurrect this in a new form to make it work for the modern day.*

*And those conversations have been happening at a sort of loose level for five years or so, and at a serious level where we are committing to plans and the like for what, two years I would say. So we're ready for it, I'm just waiting for the next board meeting for them to push the button and launch us, as it were."*

Bill, Business Development Manager, Sage CVS

#### 6.4.13 Innovative legitimacy

This final worldview of legitimacy - innovative legitimacy - is driven is shared by a small number of highly innovative actors who possess a constant drive to move forward. Progress is central to their dominant value set, which underpins their worldview of innovative legitimacy. This worldview favours 'being entrepreneurial' as legitimate in all situations, and experimental approaches are welcomed by actors with this worldview. This is demonstrated below in my notes from a meeting I held with Edward, the CEO of Thyme CVS:

*"I still can't get my head around the conversation that I've had with Edward this morning. I've never met anyone like him before. He's strong, inspirational but most of all he's visionary. He moves from one idea to the next to the next at such a rapid speed that I'm still thinking about the implications of the things he said three sentences earlier. And they're not just ideas, he wants to do them all. He's very experimental and you can see that this is why Thyme CVS grew to be so large in such a short space of time. For Edward, this is about taking risks to be entrepreneurial. I don't think he has a plan, I think his thinking is, 'let's just try lots of things and one of them will work!' I've never known anybody so creative or innovative as he is and I have to confess that even I am finding him inspiring. Some of his ideas are off the wall definitely. But then I've also never seen a CVS before that is earning so much money from close working with the higher education sector, or that is trying to earn money from police and crime commissioners, or that is starting up language projects,*

*hiring out their events people to corporate organisations, and charging large organisations for volunteering projects. His attitude is very much about let's just test it and if it works then we'll go with it."*

Author's research diaries

Karl, the marketing manager at Parsley CVS, was perhaps the strongest actor displaying this worldview of legitimacy within the study, and his comments below summarise his position as having a value set driven by progress and views on legitimacy that are framed by the idea of innovation:

*"But for us to have a bash at it, we need to be released from this command culture, you can't get something which is entrepreneurial and is going to cut deals and negotiate, if you have to refer all the time to the central figure who is... politically, anti a lot of things as well. And I don't know how much she thinks charging is a good idea, I think she thinks charging is a necessary evil and she's just got to get on with it and so she's quite likely ... to say no. But if you ask me, we should do it because it'll take us to new ground, we'll progress to new things..."*

Karl, Marketing Manager, Parsley CVS

In this section I have presented thirteen individual actor worldviews of legitimacy, along with the dominant value sets underpinning them. In the next section of the chapter I go on to build in this information in order to explore the ways in which actors of particular worldviews employ particular rhetorical strategies in order to promote their own worldview of legitimacy or negate those of others.

#### 6.5 Development of analysis process in relation to rhetorical strategies associated with actor worldviews of legitimacy

Having established through the analysis a range of thirteen individual actor worldviews of legitimacy and the dominant value sets underpinning them, I moved on to explore how these actor worldviews of legitimacy played out in

practice through the arguments and language used by actors to argue their case in relation to what is legitimate, or negate the views of others that they deem not to be legitimate. Such a notion of the employment of rhetorical strategies in respect of legitimacy promotion builds on Suddaby and Greenwood's (2005) paper on rhetorical strategies and legitimacy (see Chapter 3). I define rhetorical strategies to mean:

*The approach to language employed by actors to seek to persuade other actors of their worldview - or negate the worldviews of others.*

My analytical process in relation to the rhetorical strategies employed by actors to further their respective worldviews of legitimacy developed as a result of having identified information which appeared to signal that different types of actors with different dominant value sets and different worldviews of legitimacy might argue for those legitimacy worldviews in different ways. This initially came out through the examination of a number of group meetings to discuss charging when coding data relating to actor dominant value sets under Template 6. I explored this data further through examination of a number of other group meetings, before beginning to build Template 7 in an attempt to account for such rhetorical strategies.

Extracts from such group meetings saw a coming together of a range of rhetorical strategies: below is an extract which led me to explore the idea of rhetorical strategies further through the data. Here, a meeting of managers which I facilitated in order to examine issues relating to charging at Sage CVS demonstrates this through the bringing together of a range of perspectives.

*"Dawn: "Okay, I think we might need to park that one for now [whether or not to charge small FLOs] as we can't reach agreement yet. We can move on and maybe come back to it another day."*

*Bill: "Can I just say before we do that though, I think we're really missing a trick if we don't. I think it's not just about whether we're nice to people or not - we can continue to be a nice organisation, that's*

*fine, but we still need to ask them to pay money. After all, the world is turning and things are changing all around us... Soon we won't have any money left to have the luxury to decide whether we want to work with them. We need to act to keep up with the rest of the sector, and keep our money trickling in. Small groups shouldn't be excluded from that."*

*Roberta: "Well. Ok... Maybe. I mean. It's not going to be in line with our service level agreement is it?"*

*Kelly: "It might not necessarily be now but I think we could bring the Council on board with us, if we approach it in the right way. But I think that's about approaching it in a way that doesn't say, like you say Bill, a bit bull in a china shop, we're coming in here doing it whether you like it or not, but it's about acknowledging that we actually have a shared set of ideas with our partners at the Council, I think we need to acknowledge that, that shared approach, because I think in us acknowledging that they want the same thing we do then it changes the way we do things... and we need to just go and see them really, we need to see ourselves as being in it together, because we are. And that's why we can't just rush ahead and charge them [small FLOs]."*

*Barbara: "Can't we? We need money. And more than that, we need it fast. We don't have time to go softly softly with them all smiles and the like, we need the money now really. I know you think we've got enough time... with the reserves and that. But there are so many things you lot don't see that I have to think about every day... that bleeding roof... That's going to be done for by the time this Winter's out I swear. We need money now, and when I say now I mean yesterday really."*

*Donna: "Babs, you can't just do something because we need money fast! There are other things you can do for that surely. Do a b\*\*\*\*\**

*grant application or two. We'll find something. You always do, I trust you. [Chuckles.] Seriously, we can't just start charging willy nilly. People will stop coming to us and then your job won't be safe, nor mine. Kelly will have to sack us all!"*

Meeting with Senior Managers, Sage CVS

In the extract above, actors with five different legitimacy worldviews have come together in a meeting and their different worldviews appear to be reflected in their language. Those different legitimacy worldviews are:

- Bill - Pioneering legitimacy
- Roberta - Regulative legitimacy
- Kelly - Stakeholder based legitimacy
- Barbara - Survival based legitimacy
- Donna - Historical legitimacy

In coding the data beyond these initial group meetings, I sought out actors with the most visible stances in relation to their worldview of legitimacy to and then sought to establish if there were particular types of language employed by these people. I used this language to draw up Template 7. In developing coding relating to particular rhetorical strategies, I only sought to include a rhetorical strategy inference on the template if similar types of language were employed frequently and was readily observable.

Having been through the coding process, I identified ten individual rhetorical strategies, a combination of which were employed across the thirteen actor types. These are outlined in Table 6B, set out below.

**Table 6B: Rhetorical strategies employed by actors**

| Rhetorical strategy | Brief explanation  |
|---------------------|--|
| Authority           | Arising from people in positions of authority, this rhetorical strategy is based on the use of power to instruct other actors as to the expectations of their behaviours and beliefs |

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Security              | Again often arising from people in positions of authority, this rhetorical strategy is used to instil a sense of fear - e.g. 'if we don't do this we won't have any money and then you won't have a job'  |
| Legal threat          | Another threat based rhetorical strategy; actors employing this strategy emphasise the negative aspects of potentially facing a legal challenge   |
| Shared values         | The emphasis under this rhetorical strategy is around finding common ground and moving forward as a collective. This strategy can either have an internal emphasis - i.e. getting staff on board - or an external emphasis - i.e. getting external stakeholders on board. |
| Historical strategy   | This strategy draws on the historical decisions of the organisation - e.g. 'we've already discussed that, so there's no need to come back to it'  |
| Readiness             | This strategy is based around persuading other actors of the organisation's readiness - or lack of readiness - to take on a new change, by highlighting what might go wrong   |
| Resources             | This rhetorical strategy emphasised the need for resources in an attempt to instil a sense of urgency   |
| Time                  | This rhetorical strategy emphasised the need to move quickly in an attempt to instil a sense of urgency   |
| Outside forces        | An outside forces rhetorical strategy focused predominantly on forces beyond the control of the organisation and the actors in question. This strategy was used to create a sense of unease about what may be ahead in order to help seek a path of certainty.            |
| Knowledge development | This strategy surrounded the attempt to create buy-in to the idea that 'knowledge is power' and that the pursuit of knowledge in its own right would help the organisation develop.   |

From here, I then developed the model of rhetorical strategies further by mapping across the data not only the actors with highly apparent worldviews of legitimacy but also those whose worldviews of legitimacy appeared in more subtle ways. In doing so, I mapped each actor to a particular rhetorical strategy - or multiple rhetorical strategies where relevant - and this process

showed rhetorical strategies to fall into line with the actor worldviews of legitimacy. This mapping across from legitimacy type and underpinning dominant value set and across further to rhetorical strategies is therefore detailed in Table 6C, below.

**Table 6C: Worldviews of legitimacy, dominant value sets and rhetorical strategies**

| Type of legitimacy        | Values driving legitimacy world views                                       | Rhetorical strategies                |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Historical legitimacy     | Internal norms and routines   | Authority; security                  |
| Moral legitimacy          | Strong moral compass, ideologically driven                                  | Historical; shared values (internal) |
| Political legitimacy      | Perceived authority   | Shared values (internal)             |
| Regulative legitimacy     | Legal frameworks, governing documents, contractual commitments              | Legal threat                         |
| Strategic legitimacy      | Sticking to a plan; strategic frameworks and documents                      | Historical; authority                |
| Harmonious legitimacy     | Moves away from conflicting narratives; harmony                             | Shared values (internal)             |
| Technical legitimacy      | Practicality, business as usual, things being seen to run smoothly, systems | Readiness                            |
| Stakeholder legitimacy    | Preserving relationships within institutional environment                   | Shared values (external)             |
| Normative legitimacy      | External institutional perceptions of organisation                          | Resources                            |
| Survival based legitimacy | Fight for survival  | Time; security                       |
| Opportunistic legitimacy  | Taking new opportunities as they arise; filling 'gaps'; gradual change      | Time; security; outside forces       |
| Pioneering legitimacy     | Leading the sector / industry   | Outside forces; resources            |
| Innovative legitimacy     | Progress; Advancing practice  | Knowledge development, resources     |

Following the development of these rhetorical strategies as mapped against legitimacy worldviews and dominant value sets, this model fed directly into the typology of worldviews of legitimacy presented in Section 6.7. Prior to the presentation of this typology however, in section 6.6 I elaborate on each rhetorical strategy in more detail.

## 6.6 Rhetorical strategies employed by actors to further their worldview of legitimacy

In the following sections 6.6.1 - 6.6.10 I elaborate on each rhetorical strategy by providing examples from the data of them being employed in practice. This follows the development process set out in section 6.5.

### 6.6.1 Authority

In terms of how a rhetorical strategy of authority plays out in practice, the primary strategy used was one of command authority, underpinned by a notion of 'you must do this because I am your boss and I say so'. Closely aligned with this narrative was one of security, specifically job security: given that the authoritarian typically holds a senior level position in the organisation, this is one by which control can be overtly exercised. Below follow two separate examples relating to the employment of an authority strategy: the first from Doreen at Parsley CVS taken during a group meeting during which Elaine was caused to leave in tears. The second example is also taken from Parsley CVS arising from Tessa, the Chair of trustees.

*[Prior to this extract, Elaine had been explaining some of the work she had been doing in pursuing charging for services whilst Doreen had been off sick.]*

*"Doreen: [Long, tense silence.] "I think you have missed something vital here Elaine."*

*Elaine: "Have I? What's that then?"*

*Doreen: "It's that I am the f\*\*\*\*\* manager of this centre and I am the one that says what happens. Why the hell didn't you phone me? You can't just go off on one, doing what you want with all your nice little*

*ideas. We've got jobs that we need to keep. Yours will be going at this rate. You will fix this."*

Extract taken from a group meeting of funding advisors and development workers, Parsley CVS

*Tessa: "It's simple really, isn't it? There's no luxury option. There's no getting to decide what charging you like and what charging you don't. I say do it, Doreen says do it, you do it. Are we clear?"*

Tessa, Chair of Trustees at Parsley CVS, extract from Author's Research Diaries based on a conversation in the office between Tessa and Steve, Administrator

### 6.6.2 Security

To some extent, this rhetorical strategy holds some parallels to that of the authority strategy outlined above. This strategy employs tactics designed to have a negative impact on the person on the receiving end of the strategy, and to make them feel some level of discomfort about their future prospects. The extract below exemplifies this strategy well:

*Connie: "I think the thing is, you [staff members] just need to know don't you that I'm not messing with you. That it's a case of, make money and keep your job, or don't make money and don't keep your job. There's definitely a job incentive in it for you here, I don't mean promotion - I just mean, keeping it! So I'm not really worried about how well it goes down with people, you basically just have to deal with it and accept that we need money to keep employing you."*

Connie, Deputy CEO, Thyme CVS, addressing a staff meeting about charging for services

It is clear from the extract above that the intention is to bring staff members towards focusing on their personal prospects as opposed to their preferences within their role at Thyme CVS. This use of personal implication appears to be intended to focus the minds of staff and allow them to see the chargeable services dilemma from a different perspective. This is further exemplified below:

*"Basically, I'm not saying that we never say never to going free again, but right now it's about needing to keep us in work is it not? About needing to make sure that you can put food on the table for the kids? I know we don't agree but surely you see it's about just keeping us jobs ticking over."*

Donna, Volunteer Centre Manager, Sage CVS in conversation with myself and Debbie, a development worker

### 6.6.3 Legal threat

Rhetorical strategies associated with legal threats are similarly negative in tone to those documented in relation to 'security' in the section above. Under a legal threat rhetorical strategy however, the tone is less personal but still intended to focus the mind on the worst case scenario. This is demonstrated in the extract below, from a staff meeting about chargeable support services:

*"It's not just about us though is it, it's about the members. We can't decide what the members want to do. And do you know what, if we decide it without them, they would have every right to take us for a legal challenge on it, I don't know, in the civil courts or something. Imagine that, we'd have Oliver up there in his best suit trying to defend why we, a membership organisation, didn't even ask our members what they wanted us to do. People are fiery round here and they get het up don't they? I wouldn't put it past one of the local nutjobs to take us to court if we didn't consult our membership first."*

Faye, Funding Advisor, Rosemary CVS

Similar sentiments were expressed by Roberta at Sage CVS:

Roberta: *"I'm not being funny right, but we're not doing anything until we're sure. I don't want the b\*\*\*\*\* Charity Commission on our backs taking us to tribunal because we've been making our service users pay and it's illegal. I'm just saying. I know it's unlikely but it's possible."*

Roberta, Development Team Manager, Sage CVS

#### 6.6.4 Shared values

This rhetorical strategy is based on fostering a sense of togetherness and trying to allow the person on the receiving end of the strategy to feel part of a team. Actors using this strategy often employ the use of the words 'we' and 'us' as opposed to 'you' and 'I', and their tone of delivery is much softer and less confrontational in nature than the rhetorical strategies outlined above. There is a strong implication that 'we're all in this together'. Actors employing this rhetorical strategy also tend to use history in their rhetorical strategies; not in the same sense as the authoritarian, who uses the organisational history, but in terms of a yearning for the past – a time when everyone was perceived from the same perspective, although this may of course differ from the reality. This is exemplified by Christopher of Parsley CVS, in conversation with a group in the office:

*"For me, the thing is about what we want to do, it's about us all making a plan and getting in on it together. I'm not sure you know, I'm not sure it's proper all this charging business, I don't think it'll ever sit with us right. It's just not in our culture is it? We don't want it, don't you agree? We're not ready and we're not interested and mostly that's because we don't believe in it, but also it's because we know better than that, we've learned our people over the years and we know that it's not just us that don't want it, it's our groups as well."*

Christopher, Funding Advisor, Parsley CVS - in conversation with a group in the open plan office

A similar strategy was adopted by Maggie, of Rosemary CVS. In the extract below, she is in conversation with Faye, the funding advisor, and Rachel, a project worker.

*"Wasn't it better in the days when we joined the sector full of love for our job and vibrancy and energy, and wanting to change the world? Now all this charging stuff... it's just so different. I don't think it's what we're about. Do you? I just think... we didn't come into the third sector for this did we? We came in to help people. We don't want it do we?"*

Maggie, Development Worker, Rosemary CVS

#### 6.6.5 Historical strategy

A historical rhetorical strategy places great value on decisions that have been made before, and seeks not to waste energies or efforts in re-examining the same decision or the same set of circumstances, but placing faith in the decisions that have already been made. This is probably best exemplified in the approach of actors with strategic worldviews of legitimacy, who seek to stick to already approved business plans and strategy documents, but also in those actors possessing a moral worldview of legitimacy. In a one to one conversation with Neville, the Chair of Trustees at Thyme CVS, Neville argued the following with me:

*"Look it's about not wasting time more than anything. Well it's about two things, one is not wasting time and one is making sure we've got it right. And you get things right by going through a process. You know, a process. You think about things properly, mull them over, challenge each other and say 'what if' this and 'what if' that. And those are the things we do in our board meetings, it's the things that governance is there for. So what is the point in going through all of that consideration process only to come out the other end and throw it away and say 'who cares what we decided or why we decided it, we're just going to blow all that rational consideration that people put in for us to do this ill considered thing on a whim, it just doesn't work that*

way. *There's no point having a process and going through it if you're not going to respect the decisions that have gone already as much as the ones that are still to come.*"

Neville, Chair of Trustees, Thyme CVS

Here, such a move to not waste time on decisions that have been taken before is reflected by Oliver, the CEO of Rosemary CVS. In the extract below, he is addressing a staff team meeting in respect of charging ideas:

*"I suppose I just feel like... we've looked at all the environmental stuff a few years ago haven't we, when we were closing down [Rosemary CVS' trading company]. We looked at, well we could do this, or we could do that... it was just exhausting then wasn't it. So I don't see why we should revisit things that we've already looked at before and rejected. I suppose I think that we should all think that about charging if I'm honest! Oh, needs must I suppose..."*

Oliver, CEO, Rosemary CVS

#### 6.6.6 Readiness

Actors employing rhetorical strategies surrounding readiness tended to be those with legitimacy worldviews of technical legitimacy: they were actors that favoured readiness to change already, and their preferred rhetorical strategy sought to emphasise those matters by illuminating a sense of chaos from not being ready. The strategy was ultimately negative in tone, discussing a lack of readiness as opposed to discussions of moves that could be put in place to ensure readiness. For example:

*"So it's kind of about how unprofessional you're going to look isn't it? We had this chat the other day a little bit didn't we, do you remember that guy came in and he wanted an invoice, and we didn't even have our CRM [customer relationship management software] set up and so we couldn't invoice him yet.*

*And then he was like, 'oh well I can pay you in cash now if you prefer' and I was like 'no, you can't pay in cash because the CRM isn't set up so I wouldn't even have anywhere to log that you've paid'. And then*

*he was like, well what do I do then? And actually none of us knew, because we'd not really got to that point where we have to ask for money from people, but that's kind of my point isn't it, how embarrassing is that? When they're actively trying to pay you money and you can't take it. It's silly. So we need to stop asking people for money until we know what the system is, there needs to be some kind of system or something or we'll just embarrass ourselves."*

Sarah, Marketing Assistant, Parsley CVS

As noted above, it is the lack of readiness that is emphasised under this rhetorical strategy, in a bid to create a sense of chaos and panic, such that change couldn't go ahead until the appropriate systems were in place. This was reflected in the language employed by Joanna, a development worker at Sage CVS, in the extract below:

*"Frankly, I just don't understand why you'd rush into it. Why you wouldn't, I don't know, take the time to get a nice website in place, to get your charging systems in place, to know what everybody thinks... What's the rush? Get it right, then go and do it. You can't just push ahead just because the time feels like it might be right. We are no way near ready! No way near."*

Joanna, Development Worker, Sage CVS

### 6.6.7 Resources

The notion behind this rhetorical strategy is to argue on the basis of need, particularly with reference to financial need. This tends to be an argument that arises from actors with worldviews which favour charging, and is seen across a number of legitimacy worldviews including normative, pioneering and innovative worldviews. The basis of the argument is that charging for support services is a necessity given the lack of resources available if charging does not take place. The frame of the problem follows a simplistic formulation where two alternative ends of a spectrum are pitted against each other, with no accounting for any combination of events or outcomes that

might lie in the middle of the spectrum. Typically, this framing is along the lines of 'either we charge, or we go under'. This is exemplified below:

*"But what would you do if you couldn't choose? Because we can't choose really, can we? I mean, we are talking all about shall we do this or that but in reality, it's shall we charge or shall we in a year or eighteen months cease to be. Ultimately, none of us want that because we need our jobs still. So it's charge isn't it? It's obvious when you put it like that. We don't have the money to make other choices."*

Karen, Finance Manager, Rosemary CVS

Another example of such a strategy being employed is provided in the extract below from Karl at Parsley CVS:

*[Sings.] " 'Money money money, must be funny... it's a rich man's world'. [Chuckles immediately.] Oh no, it's not a rich man's world, it could be though! I feel like I'm going out of my mind. This whole thing about the CRM and the £30 and the begging people to buy our hourly consultancy. It's stupid, there's thousands out there to be made if we charge for the right things. And you know this place needs the money. I've never worked anywhere so desperate for money. Come on Elaine, you and me, we've got to win them over."*

Karl, Marketing Manager, Parsley CVS

#### 6.6.8 Time

Arguments using a rhetorical strategy based on time are aimed at creating a sense of urgency, and a potential sense of missed opportunity. The underlying principle in adopting such a strategy is the inference that with the passage of time, situations and circumstances change and opportunities may be missed. This is a strategy particularly employed by those actors who favour an opportunistic worldview of legitimacy, as demonstrated in the extract below:

*"Why do I want to charge [public sector bodies] for [information]? Because if they don't pay us for it then they'll have to find it themselves. And once they've learned how to do it themselves, they'll do it again. So we need to show them we can give them that service before the that opportunity closes down to us and we lose out on potential income."*

Connie, Deputy CEO, Thyme CVS

It is demonstrated further in the following extract from Barbara at Sage CVS:

*"You are going to kill me Kelly but I am not going to come in your office and I am going to write a long list on your wall of all the things in this building that are going to go wrong this winter, that we can't afford to fix. And then I'm going to write all of the staff whose contracts are up at the end of the financial year. And then I'm going to ask you why you think we need to go and schmooze with the council over it when we could just be getting on with it. Time is ticking, we've got to get on and do this thing [charging]."*

Barbara, Finance Manager, Sage CVS

#### 6.6.9 Outside forces

Similarly to the rhetorical strategy employed around time, use of rhetorical strategies that consider 'outside forces' also work on the basis of the passage of opportunity and of circumstances being outside of the control of both the LIO and the actor making the argument. Arguments here tend to be made around the idea of not knowing what will happen in the organisational field surrounding the LIO, and hence the LIO needing to take steps to control its own outcomes to the best extent possible. For example, this debate may be framed by an actor saying that charging is appropriate because if their own LIO did not charge, others around them may start to do so first and may mean that if their own LIO decided to charge at a later date, they may have potentially lost ground. On that basis, the idea of control very much

underpins this rhetorical strategy. In the example below, Paul, a board member at Sage CVS discusses his perspective at a board meeting:

*"Ultimately, I don't want us to be the ones that go last. I want us to go first so I know what's going on and so we're in control. The world around us is moving at such a rapid pace and it's hard to keep up, but I don't want us to end up on the back burner because we didn't change with the times and somebody else did."*

Paul, Board Member, Sage CVS

In addition, the strategy is demonstrated by Linda at Rosemary CVS:

*"Basically I don't care about taking our time, I care about getting it right as things change around us. I'm worried, right. I'm worried about Kale CVS [in the next borough] starting to charge and starting to try to steal our customers, and I'm worried about Fennel CVS doing the same. We've got to be the ones that just f\*\*\*\*\* go for it, because if we don't, things will move on and we just won't be part of the picture any more."*

Linda, Board Member, Rosemary CVS

#### 6.6.10 Knowledge development

Finally, with respect to a rhetorical strategy relating to knowledge development, here charging is seen as much more of a positive point than a negative point. Actors taking this approach to convincing the people working alongside them to get on board with their thinking tended to take a much more positive stance in both their tone and their argument, with the argument being particularly focused around creative thinking and imagining the possibilities if the LIO opened itself up to new territory. Karl - the Marketing Manager at Parsley CVS - was perhaps one most innovative in his approach to his thinking and was very keen on progress being beneficial in its own right. This is demonstrated below.

*"But we need a new brand if we're going to do something. If you're going to do something differently, make it new, make it different, make*

*it sound different, look different. We're coming at it from no great detail, we've not thought about it, and it's probably not going to work. But what's happening is really interesting. But you can't just sit back, there's a certain sort of cynicism saying 'it's not going to work' – you can only win if you go and try and make things happen, and even if it doesn't happen you'll have learned something."*

Karl, Marketing manager, Parsley CVS

Edward of Thyme CVS also reflected this type of rhetorical strategy in his language:

*"It's just that it's going to be wonderful when we rule the world, and we have all these wonderful voluntary sector services, and we have an events arm, and we have a consultations arm, and we have our database arm and we have all these things and we will be rich! And I don't really even mean money rich, we will be knowledge rich... We will be culture rich. It will be amazing."*

Edward, CEO, Thyme CVS

Having presented each of the ten rhetorical strategies for promotion of specific actor worldviews of legitimacy, I now move on to propose an overarching typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy.

### 6.7 A typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy

In order to develop the final overarching typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, I brought together information presented in sections 6.2 through to 6.6 regarding actor worldviews of legitimacy, the dominant value set underpinning each of these legitimacy worldviews, and the rhetorical strategies employed by actors against the backdrop of a shifting institutional environment. They are initially combined earlier in the chapter in Table 6C in order to give a sense for how they link together, but having further explored the data in relation to rhetorical strategies I now look to present a full typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy. In doing this, I draw together

information as above and as presented in Table 6C with descriptive information that helps visualise a particular actor type in respect of each worldview of legitimacy and their associated dominant value set and their preferred rhetorical strategy/ies. I have combined these areas into a single typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, presented in Table 6D.

I argue that under this typology, actors use their own worldview of legitimacy to shape their consideration of, construction of and responses to ideas of legitimacy against the backdrop of a changing institutional environment relating to chargeable support services. In turn, these worldviews are underpinned by a dominant value set and they are promoted via the employment of one or two key rhetorical strategies associated with each worldview of legitimacy, by which the actor seeks to bring other actors on board with their own respective legitimacy worldview. In sections 6.8 and 6.9, I will discuss the circumstances under which this typology might typically come to the fore. My primary argument is that whilst actors possess said worldviews of legitimacy and dominant value sets at all times, they are elevated at times of a shifting institutional backdrop, at which point actors seek to join with like minded actors to shape the institutional environment through their worldviews of legitimacy.

The typology in Table 6D characterises thirteen individual actor types, based on their worldviews of legitimacy; their dominant value set, and the rhetorical strategies which they use to promote their own worldview of legitimacy.

Further, I have attempted to characterise each actor type by providing information regarding their preferred approach to charging; what they might be likely to say in relation to chargeable support services, and further I provide an example of an actor that fits into each category. I have also given each actor type a 'title' in order to bring this information together into a clear and easily readable typology.

This typology will be explored in more depth in Chapter 7 with respect to its strengths, weaknesses, likeness to the literature already available, and contribution to the body of knowledge.

**Table 6D: A typology of actor worldview**

Progressively more anti charging

| Overarching term                             | The authoritarian   | The resistor  | The contentious objector   | The quiet dissenter  | The strategist  | The submissive  | The pragmatist   |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Worldview of legitimacy</b>               | Historical  | Moral   | Regulative   | Political  | Strategic   | Harmonious  | Technical  |
| <b>Underpinning dominant value set</b>       | Internal norms and routines   | Strong moral compass, ideologically driven  | Legal frameworks, governing documents, contractual commitments   | Perceived authority  | Sticking to a plan; strategic frameworks and documents  | Moves away from conflicting narratives; harmony                             | Practicality, business as usual, things being seen to run smoothly, systems and processes  |
| <b>Rhetorical strategy/ies employed</b>      | Authority; security   | Historical; shared values   | Legal threat   | Shared values (internal)   | Historical; authority   | Shared values (internal or external)  | Readiness  |
| <b>Typical approach to charging</b>          | Doesn't want to charge; extremely vocal about the threat of change that charging poses. | Doesn't want to charge and tries to find ways to avoid doing so. If pushed, would choose charging at a low level and not making any profit. | Will charge, but doesn't want to charge for membership due to constitutional issues with doing so; would prefer charges for additional services such as writing funding bids | Goes along with charging but whispers about their worries that it won't work. Favours charging models that aren't radical e.g. small membership charge | Approach to charging determined by whatever is written in strategic plan – charging preference is in line with whatever is documented | Doesn't have much of an opinion on charging, just wants to 'get on with it' | Charging approach based on what is realistic and achievable – often this is through a combination model of membership charges plus additional charges where possible |
| <b>Likely to say</b>                         | "We've always done it this way"   | "I don't think this is fair or right"   | Check the contract before we do anything"  | "Well, I'm not really sure, but if you say so"   | "This is / isn't in the strategic plan, so we can / can't do it"  | "Let's work this out together"  | "We need to make sure we have the right systems and skills in place before we commit to anything"  |
| <b>Examples of actors with this approach</b> | Doreen, CEO, Parsley CVS  | Oliver, CEO, Rosemary CVS   | Faye, Funding Advisor, Rosemary CVS  | Debbie, Development Worker, Sage CVS   | Neville, Chair of Trustees, Thyme CVS   | Roz, Administrator, Thyme CVS   | Joanne, Development Worker, Sage CVS   |

## 6.8 Development of eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing

Following the establishment of the typology presented in section 6.7 and the corresponding Template 7, I went on to further explore how such a typology might play out in practice. In doing this, I first went back to Template 7 to explore the circumstances around which rhetorical strategies were employed by actors. In doing so, I established the notion of a 'window of opportunity' in which actors perceived an opportunity to influence.

I added the notion of a window of opportunity and an integrative theme to Template 8 and I coded any data that might imply actors were seeking to act in relation to a perceived institutional shift. I particularly sought data relating to tracing actors through the ethnography on a time-series basis to explore the development of their position, and their position in relation to others in their environment. From here, I sought out information establishing the linkages between actors' worldviews of legitimacy at times of institutional shift. In doing this, I established that across and between the groupings of actors and across all sites, actors appeared to follow a similar process in terms of the ways in which they perceived and responded to legitimacy, regardless of their worldview. In my final template therefore, Template 9, I added an additional layer of coding to the template which documented that process. In establishing exactly what that process was, I sought out information relating to the linkages between actors, but also between their perceptions of charging and the institutional environment surrounding them. This formed the final template, and the process resulting from such a process is documented in section 6.9

## 6.9 An eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing

Having presented the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy in section 6.7, I now intend to shed light on the circumstances surrounding which this typology plays out in practice. I propose an eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing, which is set out below:

## **Eight stage process of actor legitimacy shaping and influencing**

1. Actors possess dominant value sets, which inform their worldview of what is, and what is not, legitimate.
2. Actors' worldviews of what is, and what is not, legitimate are in turn shaped accordingly by their dominant value set.
3. Such worldviews are employed by actors through which to view legitimacy on a day to day basis, but typically business as usual activities do not provide actors an impetus upon which to act.
4. At times of a shifting institutional backdrop, actors perceive a shift in the institutional environment.
5. Internal deliberations begin accordingly in respect of the perceived shifting institutional environment. These are framed through the employment of individual actors' respective worldviews of legitimacy and conducted by employing each actor's respective rhetorical strategies.
6. Actors use the perceived shifts in the institutional environment to seek to shape organisational direction within the institutional environment.
7. In seeking to shape the institutional environment, actors seek to join together with other actors who possess like minded approaches in order to gain a critical mass of influence.
8. Collectively, groups of actors with similar worldviews in turn seek to influence their organisational environment.

Some stages of this process have already been accounted for in the earlier parts of this chapter. Stages 1 and 2 of the process are accounted for in sections 6.3 and 6.4 for example, whilst the employment of rhetorical strategies covered in section 6.5 and section 6.6 are covered at stages 5 and 8 of the process. However, a number of the stages here have not been detailed in the prior analysis and hence are detailed below. I explore this taking a step by step approach to the eight stage process, by pointing out where this information has already been established rather than duplicating it.

**Stage 1: Actors possess dominant value sets, which inform their worldview of what is, and what is not, legitimate.**

Information in respect of this stage of the process is presented in sections 6.3 and 6.4 of this chapter, whereby actor worldviews of legitimacy are explored alongside their dominant value sets.

**Stage 2: Actors' worldviews of what is, and what is not, legitimate are in turn shaped accordingly by their dominant value set.**

Information in respect of this stage of the process is presented in sections 6.3 and 6.4 of this chapter in respect of actor worldviews of legitimacy.

**Stage 3: Such worldviews are employed by actors through which to view legitimacy on a day to day basis, but typically business as usual activities do not provide actors an impetus upon which to act.**

In relation to this stage of the process, information gathered from the data related to conversations about how actors felt about their organisation, their institutional environment, their colleagues and their routines prior to their perceptions of any moves towards charging. Data here also related to how actors felt towards ideas of chargeable support services at this stage. Such data, when treated in aggregate across the four sites, pointed towards actors still feeling critical of their organisational environment from time to time, and of the institutional environment surrounding it, but that they did not feel empowered to challenge where they did feel critical, due to the routine nature of daily organisational life. This is expressed in the quotations below:

*"Don't get me wrong. It's not just charging that I don't like about this place! There's lots I don't like... But I try not to let a lot of those things bother me. Sometimes I think the things we do aren't right... Some of the funding workshops I've done haven't been done in the right way but I just did them because Roberta told me I had to do them because the Heritage Lottery Fund or whoever wanted to come along. But it*

*doesn't mean I like it, it doesn't mean we shouldn't do things by the book. [I ask Eric why he doesn't speak up when he wants to challenge.] Basically, I suppose it's... You can't be bothered making a fuss over the little things can you? You save it 'til a big thing comes up... like this [charging]. What's the point in wasting your efforts?"*

Eric, Funding Advisor, Sage CVS

*"I suppose if I'm utterly honest with you, Dawn, I haven't been happy here for some time. I think as an organisation, we just don't... oh I don't know, I don't think that we reach out enough. I don't think we try hard enough to do new things, to be bigger, better, bolder. I don't think we think about our members at the forefront of what we do. I am very frustrated with the direction of things in general, but you know, you just go along with it don't you? It's only now that you're here asking these questions, and now that Oliver and Cora and the whole lot of them keep thinking about charging... well now it's really come to the forefront of my mind is I imagine what I'm trying to say here."*

Faye, Funding Advisor, Rosemary CVS

#### **Stage 4: At times of a shifting institutional backdrop, actors perceive a shift in the institutional environment.**

This stage refers to the interactions between actors and the institutional environment, particularly in reference to the fact that actors perceive a shift in the institutional environment surrounding them. Data in relation to this stage of the process linked to clearly articulated discussions of the external environment and of ideas of changes both within it and within the organisation. This is demonstrated below:

*"Ok, so I know that when you do a job like this, and you must know because you've done it too, you're just so in touch with the sector aren't you? You see things, you hear things... You keep your ear to the ground to know what's coming next. After all, we're supposed to be the leading organisations in the area aren't we, we're supposed to*

*be the ones pushing things forward. Well, for me, I am always out listening, meeting people, stakeholders, talking... Lately nobody's talking. They're all looking inwardly. They're all worried about their money. They're all trying to work out how they'll bridge this enormous gap that's being left by the changes to funding in the councils, funding in the CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups), funding in the Big Lottery now that BASIS has gone. Things are definitely changing, so then it's how do we respond?"*

Tania, Development Manager, Thyme CVS

*"It's not just about what we think though is it? It would be nice if it was, but it's about what them out there think. It's about them knowing that we're doing it right because they know things are changing and we know things are changing, so we need to be seen to change in line with them I think. I sense it though, just, I think the sector is starting to feel different, more corporate. I think we'll all start to feel it more now."*

Teresa, Development Worker, Parsley CVS

**Stage 5: Internal deliberations begin accordingly in respect of the perceived shifting institutional environment. These are framed through the employment of individual actors' respective worldviews of legitimacy and conducted by employing each actor's respective rhetorical strategies.**

This stage of the process is documented in sections 6.3-6.6, which link to both actor worldviews of legitimacy and to the employment of rhetorical strategies by which actors argue for their favoured worldviews of legitimacy.

**Stage 6: Actors use the perceived shifts in the institutional environment to seek to shape organisational direction within the institutional environment.**

At this stage of the eight stage process, actors begin to seek to exploit a window of opportunity within their institutional environment which they perceive arises as a result of the shifting institutional backdrop. Such a window of

opportunity is seen by actors to give rise to pursuit of further challenge than may typically be the case on a day to day basis within the organisation. These moves towards influencing the institutional environment are exemplified in the quotes below:

*"Look, I wouldn't normally bother. I'm not an argumentative person. But I just think it feels different at the moment... When everything's changing around you it makes you sit up and think. It makes you think, I guess, what do I want the future to look like? How am I going to be a part of that? And it makes you think, well I'd rather have a few arguments than sit on my a\*\*\* and know that this place went under because I didn't do anything about it."*

Estelle, County Funding Manager, Thyme CVS

*"So I'm thinking, yes it is time for me to get involved. I know it's not directly my job but is working out what we do about charging really anyone's job, technically? Doreen's I suppose, but she's not here so we're all thinking about it and we're all aware that... things feel different don't they? The voluntary world is becoming more corporate by the day. I believe that we need to assert our own place in that corporate world or it will assert itself onto us, so that's what I'll be doing."*

Vishal, Senior Manager, Parsley CVS

*"Of course the world is changing. Of course it is. It's time now, and I mean now, because it is our opportune moment, to take the bull by the horns. I'm already out there influencing our partners. They don't even know they're going to be our partners of tomorrow yet, but they will be. It's in my sights already. I want to take us into that new world."*

Bill, Business Development Manager, Sage CVS

**Stage 7: In seeking to shape the institutional environment, actors seek to join together with other actors or like minded approaches in order to gain a critical mass of influence.**

Much of the data falling into this stage of the eight stage process is derived from conversations taking place informally amongst actors in respect of charging. The types of conversations in which this data arises are those in which actors informally discuss their positions on charging. Through these conversations, actors appear to be going through the process of establishing those who are on the same 'side' as them, with a similar worldview, and those whose views are opposed to theirs. Below are extracts from conversations where this seeking out of like minded actors has taken place.

"Maggie: *"It's me and you against the world, Katie."*

Katie: *"What do you mean?"*

Maggie: *"The charging. Dawn loves it, that's why she's here. Don't deny it Dawn! [Laughs.] Faye loves it even though she pretends she's worried about it. Oliver loves it even though he pretends he's some kind of sixties hippy... he whines about it but he wants to do it right. Karen. She loves it obviously. What accountant wouldn't? So it's just me and you. We're going to fight them. I don't care if you're all listening! We're doing that fight. What do you think Katie?"*

Katie: *"Oh well... You are right actually. I am on your side more than I am on theirs."*

Extract from Author's Research Diaries based on a noted down conversation between Katie, Administrator and Rosemary CVS and Maggie, Development Worker at Rosemary CVS

*"Ladies. I need your help in this next couple of weeks. Obviously [Dawn is here] and so we're going to be moving to look at the membership stuff more now. I know we've talked about it. I know that you get it. I know*

*that you're on board with me. We need to sell it. I want buy in, and the only way I can get it is that if those of us that think the same about doing*

*this are talking about it to people. So I think we need to work closely with Dawn to get it to the point where we're winning people over."*

Connie, Deputy CEO, Thyme CVS - taken from a group meeting with Senior  
Managers

Karl [to Elaine]: *"I feel a bit like we're Pinky and the Brain you know."*

Elaine: *"You can be Pinky. I'll be the Brain."*

Karl: *"I'm serious!"*

Elaine: *"So am I!"*

Karl: *"Stop it, I am serious! What I mean is. You and I are the only ones that actually want to take this stuff out there and try and change things for the better with this charging, you and I are the only ones that seem to accept that this £30 business won't work and that we need a better, more proactive solution. We need to work together lass or we won't get anywhere on it."*

Elaine: [Looks thoughtful.] *"You're right. We do need to work together. Solidarity and all that. Yeah. Let's."*

Extract from Author's Research Diaries based on a conversation between Karl,  
Marketing Manager at Parsley CVS and Elaine, Funding Advisor at Parsley  
CVS

**Stage 8: Collectively, groups of actors with similar worldviews in turn seek to influence their organisational environment.**

At this stage of the process, groups of actors with like-minded worldviews of legitimacy have formed through the earlier stages of the process. These groups

of actors can then be seen to be working together in a bid to influence their organisational environment. Data at this stage typically relates to groups of actors taking debates in relation to charging a stage further in terms of discussing the practicalities of models which they may seek to persuade their organisation to employ; or in terms of the next steps in terms of asserting influence. This final stage of the identified process is evidenced in a number of quotations below:

*"I think it's high time we actually moved with this now. I'm glad we've been able to get a few of our heads together, a few of us productive ones with serious ideas about how to take this forwards. I think what we need to do next is look at how do we turn it into a reality for our future. We need to look at costed models and how do we roll it out into our culture and our ethos, and I think we need to stick together and continue to work together to make that happen."*

Cora, Chair of Trustees, Rosemary CVS

*"Ok so I think we've got a plan haven't we. Us grumps need to stick together. I'll tell them at the board meeting, I'll tell them why we can't do it [charge small FLOs]. But you need to back me up on it, I need you to show your evidence that we got from when we met with your small groups. We need to find a way of sharing it internally first though, we need to use this feedback as evidence as to what we do next. I mean, we know what we do next, we set up the ringfenced grant for the small groups to access, but we need to roll this out from being more than a double act into getting everybody's buy in, and we need to argue for that."*

Joe, Parsley CVS Board Member, in conversation with Christopher, Funding Advisor, Parsley CVS

*"So there's a few of us now and we're all working together and we're basically developing a model on how do we roll out membership packages to the private sector. I guess you know who it is, it's me, Tania, Connie, we're the main ones driving it forwards because we're the ones that have wanted to engage with that agenda. We're trying to turn*

*it into a reality and we think that by pressing ahead with the plans then we will more easily start to get the buy in from the rest of the organisation, including the board."*

Estelle, County Funding Manager, Thyme CVS

This eight stage process shows the evolution of actor conceptions of and responses to ideas of legitimacy in relation to chargeable support services, from the initial stages whereby actors' dominant value sets inform their legitimacy worldviews, through to stages whereby actors' legitimacy worldviews are employed by which to perceive an institutional shift, and from here whereby rhetorical strategies are employed to convince other actors to join together in seeking to shape the institutional environment. This eight stage process, along with the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, will be explored in terms of its theoretical implications in Chapter 7.

#### 6.10 Summary

In this chapter I have presented a model of actor worldviews of legitimacy, comprising of a number of two key components: a typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, and an eight stage process by which such a typology plays out in practice. The typology of actor worldviews consists of:

- A dominant value set, which is shaped by and informed by the institutions of which the actor is a part.
- A respective worldview of legitimacy, through which the actor views what is, and what is not, legitimate.
- Key rhetorical strategies for each actor type, which are employed in seeking to persuade others of particular legitimacy worldviews.
- A number of complementary characteristics in order to illuminate the model, including ideas surrounding what each actor type would typically say in response to charging.

In addition, the eight stage process serves to provide an explanation as to how actor worldviews of legitimacy are employed in considering, constructing and

responding to ideas of legitimacy against a backdrop of chargeable support services.

In Chapter 7, I will move on to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed typology and eight stage process, their similarities and differences to the literature already in existence, and their contribution to the body of literature.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Actor worldviews of legitimacy: a contribution to the theory**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, I presented a model of actor worldviews of legitimacy based on my findings from a multi-sited ethnography which took place over a six month period, spending six weeks at four individual LIO sites. The research findings were based on two component parts: an eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing, and an associated underpinning typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy.

For clarity, in section 7.2 I will briefly recap the major features of the two component parts of the findings in order to support the discussion later in the chapter. Following this, in section 7.3 I examine the findings relating to actor worldviews of legitimacy in line with the literature available in the field, particularly picking back up on some of the key literature cited in Chapter 3. In section 7.4 I then examine the key contributions of the proposed model, before in section 7.5 summarising the limitations of the model. In section 7.6 I then move on to provide a short summary of the chapter.

#### **7.2 Brief recap of the model of actor worldviews of legitimacy**

In Chapter 6, I presented a typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, which comprised a number of key elements:

- An underpinning dominant value set which drives actor worldviews of legitimacy;
- A typology of thirteen individual worldviews of legitimacy and their key characteristics;
- Ten associated key rhetorical strategies for each actor worldview of legitimacy;

- A number of illustrative elements of the model including what each actor type might typically say in respect of the chargeable services debate, and the charging situation that they would typically favour.

Beyond this initial typology, I also presented a staged summary of the process which an actor might go through in order to seek to have their worldview of legitimacy heard and ultimately, along with other actors, seek to shape the direction of the institutional environment of which they are a part. To this end, I set out an eight stage process which starts with the actor's dominant value set, which feeds into the actor's worldview of legitimacy, which shapes the ways in which a shifting institutional backdrop is perceived and which also shapes the actor's rhetorical strategy by which they argue for their preferred worldview of legitimacy in order to gain support and in turn seek influence within their organisational environment.

Such worldviews of legitimacy are employed by the actor through which to view the institutional environment, although actors tend to lack the impetus to act on them during business as usual. At times of perceived institutional shift, actors then begin internal deliberations in respect of the changing institutional environment, at which point actors seek to use the perceived institutional shift to seek to shape their organisational environment. They do this by seeking to join up with actors with like-minded worldviews of legitimacy, who then collectively act as a group to seek to gain influence.

### 7.3 Comparison with the literature

The research findings in respect of actor worldviews of legitimacy interface with the literature at two key levels: the first is in respect of conceptions of legitimacy established through the typologies of legitimacy in the literature that the proposed model compares to. Secondly, the model can be linked to literature in relation to the ways in which ideas of legitimacy play out at the actor level, particularly against a backdrop of a shifting institutional environment. I deal with each of these areas in turn.

### 7.3.1 Comparisons to legitimacy literature

There are a number of levels at which the model makes a contribution to the literature but perhaps the most obvious comparison to make is between the model as a typology of legitimacy and other typologies of legitimacy already in existence. I therefore draw attention to the key legitimacy typologies highlighted in Chapter 3.

In order to form the basis of a discussion which compares such a vast number of typologies of legitimacy, below in Table 7A I pull together in the first instance the differing types of legitimacy and their linkages to the types of legitimacy proposed under my model, if any. Here I highlight in the left hand column the type of legitimacy arising in the literature and compare this with the types of legitimacy arising through my model of actor worldviews of legitimacy.

**Table 7A: Crossover of legitimacy typologies with actor worldviews of legitimacy model**

| <b>Legitimacy type</b>                     | <b>Brief explanation</b>                           | <b>Author(s)</b>  | <b>Correspondence with actor worldviews of legitimacy model</b>  |
|--|--|---|--|
| Cognitive or cultural-cognitive legitimacy | Institutional culture and taken for granted values | Aldrich and Fiol (1994), Scott (1995), Suchman (1995) Foreman and Whetten (2002), Zyglidopoulous (2003); Johnson and Holub (2003) and Golant and Sillince (2007). | Historical legitimacy (valuing the culture and experience of the organisation that has gone before the present day)                          |
| Sociopolitical legitimacy                  | Conformance with existing rules and laws           | Aldrich and Fiol (1994)   | Links to political legitimacy (staying quiet in order to conform with the prevailing politics and powers) and to some extent with harmonious |

|                          |  |   |   |
|--------------------------|--|---|---|
|                          |  |   | legitimacy (seeking unanimity above all else)   |
| Pragmatic legitimacy     | Based on 'audience self interest'  | Suchman (1995); Barron (1998); Foreman and Whetten (2002); Johnson and Holub (2003) | Survival-based legitimacy (that which allows survival is deemed to be the most legitimate option)   |
| Moral legitimacy         | Based on normative approval  | Suchman (1995); Barron (1998); Johnson and Holub (2003)                             | Normative legitimacy (as with Suchman's moral legitimacy, this is based predominantly upon the need for normative approval)                     |
| Exchange legitimacy      | Based on <i>"support for an organizational policy based on that policy's expected value to a particular set of constituents"</i> | Suchman (1995)  | Stakeholder legitimacy (based on the approval of stakeholders or a group of stakeholders)   |
| Influence legitimacy     | Based on the ability to be responsive to a group of actors' larger interests   | Suchman (1995)  | No correspondence   |
| Dispositional legitimacy | Based on the personification of organisations and actors favouring directions in which the organisation shares their values      | Suchman (1995)  | Moral legitimacy (perceives that which is legitimate is that which takes the path with the highest degree of perceived morality attached to it) |
| Consequential legitimacy | Based on the evaluation of the most optimal outcome  | Suchman (1995)  | No correspondence   |
| Procedural legitimacy    | Based on how robust and appropriate a set of procedures  | Suchman (1995)  | Some links to technical legitimacy  |

|                              |  |  |  |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|
|                              | might be   |  |  |
| Structural legitimacy        | Based on an organisation's socially constructed capacity to perform certain types of work              | Suchman (1995)                                     | Some links to regulative legitimacy, and also some links to technical legitimacy |
| Personal legitimacy          | Based on the charisma of a particular leader   | Suchman (1995); Weber (1924/1968)                  | No correspondence  |
| Comprehensibility legitimacy | The ease of which actors are able to explain their experiences in rational and comprehensible accounts | Suchman (1995)                                     | No correspondence  |
| Taken for granted legitimacy | Change is so deeply submerged that it is taken as a given  | Suchman (1995)                                     | No correspondence  |
| Regulatory legitimacy        | Legitimacy as governed by regulative frameworks and contracts  | Scott (1995), Deephouse (1996)                     | Correspondence with regulative legitimacy  |
| Normative legitimacy         | Legitimacy based on conformity with perceived or real pressures being placed upon the organisation     | Scott (1995)                                       | Correspondence with normative legitimacy   |
| Media legitimacy             | Based on securing the buy in of the general public   | Deephouse (1996)                                   | Correspondence to some extent with stakeholder legitimacy                        |
| Managerial legitimacy        | Based on efficiency  | Ruef and Scott (1998)                              | Linked to technical legitimacy   |
| Technical legitimacy         | Based on ideas linked to quality and technology  | Ruef and Scott (1998); Warburton and Taylor (2003) | Linked to technical legitimacy   |
| Internal legitimacy          | Legitimacy as perceived by the 'insiders' to the organisation  | Kostova and Roth (2002)                            | Some weak links to harmonious legitimacy   |
| External legitimacy          | Legitimacy as perceived by those which sit outside the   | Kostova and Roth (2002)                            | Links to stakeholder legitimacy  |

|  | organisation   |                             |   |
|--|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Moral legitimacy (note different explanation to the moral legitimacy outlined above) | Based on values of equality and social justice       | Taylor and Warburton (2003) | Links to moral legitimacy   |
| Political legitimacy   | Commitment to 'responsive' or 'downwards' legitimacy | Taylor and Warburton (2003) | Links to stakeholder legitimacy and normative legitimacy; some links to political legitimacy also |

Following the presentation of Table 7A, it is possible to examine where my actor worldviews of legitimacy model provides direct crossover with the typologies of legitimacy already in existence, and where there are areas without crossover.

There are three distinct areas here: firstly, areas that are covered in the literature but are not found in the model presented in Chapter 6. These areas predominantly relate to Suchman's (1995) contributions of 'influence legitimacy'; 'consequential legitimacy'; 'personal' legitimacy; 'comprehensibility' legitimacy; and 'taken for granted' legitimacy, along with Weber's (1924/1968) conception of charismatic legitimacy, which links with Suchman's concept of personal legitimacy. It is therefore possible to question why these types of legitimacy did not present themselves in the study. Although explanations may vary, it may be that these types of legitimacy occur at such an ingrained level that they are deeply taken for granted and therefore more difficult to unpick. For instance, there were many actors I engaged with in the field who could have been perceived as holding charismatic legitimacy, yet their charisma also manifested itself in different ways, including through the historical and cultural development of the organisation, for instance. This for example was true using Kelly, the CEO of Sage CVS as an example: she had worked in this role at Sage CVS for many years and as a result her positive outlook and charisma had filtered through to the organisational culture, which was deliberative, participative, and inclusive and strongly reflected her personality.

Secondly, there are many conceptions of legitimacy where there is crossover with the literature already in existence. Although often termed with a different name, as taken from the language I adopted within the model, these conceptions of legitimacy include historical legitimacy; moral legitimacy; regulative legitimacy; political legitimacy; harmonious legitimacy; technical legitimacy; stakeholder based legitimacy; normative legitimacy and survival based legitimacy. For these areas where there is crossover, the implication is that the assertions of the study are congruent with previous studies and therefore likely to replicate common understandings of how ideas of legitimacy are perceived, constructed, responded to and how they play out in practice.

Finally, there are four areas of legitimacy proposed in the model that appear not to be present in the current literature base. Those areas are:

- Strategic legitimacy (legitimacy based on conformity with a strategic plan);
- Opportunistic legitimacy (legitimacy based on being accepting of new opportunities and taking them as they arise);
- Pioneering legitimacy (legitimacy based on seeking to lead the field or the sector), and
- Innovative legitimacy (legitimacy based on the ability to progress and innovate).

These four areas at least initially appear to present original contributions to the literature, although it is likely that they will need further exploration to better understand their character. As such, these areas of legitimacy will be picked up again in the recommendations in Chapter 8.

Beyond identifying the initial crossover with the typologies of legitimacy, the model offers a further insight to the legitimacy literature and that is the contribution surrounding the dominant value sets that underpin each actor's specific worldview of legitimacy. This is an area that does not appear to be touched on in the literature and hence contributes a unique perspective. This is important as it contributes a new level of understanding to the theory base

around legitimacy in establishing a basis for how actors come to be convinced by one legitimacy judgement over another.

Linked to the perspective that the model adds surrounding the contribution of understanding dominant value sets underpinning actor worldviews of legitimacy, a broader point can be made here. As established at a number of points throughout the literature in Chapter 3, although there is a wealth of literature available in relation to legitimacy at large, there is very limited literature available in relation to legitimacy through the eyes of the actor, as perceived, experienced and acted upon from an actor level perspective (i.e. as opposed to an institutional level perspective). There is some work available in this respect (for example, Beckert, 1999; Bitektine, 2011) but the research findings in this thesis move the debates around actor level legitimacy on by not only providing a process by which actors may seek to shape their institutional environment through ideas of legitimacy, but also through the provision of a broad ranging model of actor worldviews of legitimacy, how they are informed (through each respective dominant value set), and how they play out (through their respective rhetorical strategies). The study therefore also contributes to a broader understanding of legitimacy as perceived through the eyes of the actor, and the practical implications for how such legitimacy may play out.

The literature review in Chapter 3 also picks up on a number of risks to legitimacy, including the need to meet the public benefit requirement in charity law; the risk of mission drift, and the risks posed to reputation, relationships, resources and responsiveness. Each of these risks proved pertinent as they proved to be in the forefront of considerations of a number of the actors through whom legitimacy was viewed - for example, Faye's concern about regulator structures links with risks surrounding the public benefit requirement and mission drift, whilst Zimmerman and Dart's (1998) paper raises a number of issues that were on the minds of actors as they considered their responses towards charging for services. Kelly, the CEO of Sage CVS, for instance, was particularly concerned about the impact charging might have on her relationships with her stakeholders. Further, many actors - such as Steve, the administrator at Parsley CVS - were concerned about their readiness in terms of

the practical skills and systems needed to be able to charge for support services. This translated to the model in terms of technical legitimacy, but was also reflected in Pope et al.'s (2003) comments about the need for non profits to up-skill in areas such as marketing.

The study does however challenge some of the established norms surrounding legitimacy in a changing institutional environment, particularly in reference to the eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing. For instance, Zucker (1987) explores the drivers for institutional change and concludes that change predominantly comes from external, normative forces. Whilst there are a number of studies which do show the roles of individual actors in institutional change (for example, Seo and Creed, 1992; Battilana et al., 1999), this research adds depth to the available body of knowledge by linking the role of individuals in institutional change to their perceptions at an actor level as to whether such change is legitimate, and further, to understandings of how actors come to hold such legitimacy judgements.

Linked to the above, in Chapter 3, I questioned whether gaining and sustaining legitimacy should then be a task for managers, especially at times of institutional change. Diez-Martin et al. (2013) assert that it should indeed be a task for managers. If the findings of this thesis are taken into consideration, there may indeed be policy or practice implications for managers in the knowledge that actors within institutions may seek to influence their organisational environment in line with their own frameworks of that which is legitimate and that which is not.

The notion that is arrived at in this study - that actors use times of perceived institutional instability to seek to promote their worldview of legitimacy within the organisational environment also backs up ideas from Hirsch and Andrews (1984), who argue that where legitimacy is not present, challenges to the status quo appear, either in terms of 'performance challenges' to the organisation. Actors seeking to shape the direction of the organisation of which they are a part in order to secure an outcome that is commensurate with their worldview of legitimacy arguably counts as such a performance challenge. Similarly, the

research builds on Pfeffer and Salancik's (1978) assertion that "*when activities of an organization are illegitimate, comments and attacks will occur*", by demonstrating that at times of institutional shift, if actors perceive such a shift to be illegitimate they seek to influence according to their own worldview of legitimacy. Arguably, such attempts to influence the organisational environment in line with one's own legitimacy worldview could be seen as such an attack, but this study also provides a process by which actors seek to employ their worldviews of legitimacy in order to seek such influence.

Finally, with reference to George, Sitkin and Barden (2006, p347)'s notion that "*patterns of institutional persistence and change depend on whether decision makers view environmental shifts as potential opportunities for or threats to gaining legitimacy*", whilst this study to some extent backs up the idea that institutional persistence and change depend on whether environmental shifts are seen as potential opportunities or threats to legitimacy, arguably the findings of the study extend the idea that it is not only decision makers who determine the approach as to whether legitimacy is sustained, but actors at the broader level within the institutional environment.

### *7.3.2 Ideas of legitimacy and how they play out at the actor level*

One of the key findings of the research study was that each respective actor group seeks to employ just one or two key rhetorical strategies in order to seek to promote their worldview of legitimacy or seek to negate that of others. A key paper linking to this notion is that of Suddaby and Greenwood (2005), who set out a series of five rhetorical strategies used to seek to gain - or ensure that others lose - legitimacy. Beyond that, they also argue that proponents and opponents of the system undergoing an institutional shift were visible not just in the things they said but in the manner in which they were said. Although this relates to only a single aspect my own research study, some parts of the findings have picked up on the various intonations of actors - for instance, a notion in Chapter 6 that Edward, who was very much in favour of change, presented his case for change shrouded in positivity.

Suddaby and Greenwood's five rhetorical strategies are:

- *An 'ontological' strategy, based on what can or cannot exist and co-exist;*
- *A 'historical' strategy, dwelling on ideas of history and tradition;*
- *A 'teleological' strategy, in which arguments were based on "divine purpose" (p54);*
- *A 'cosmological' strategy, which emphasises 'inevitability' because of forces outside the control of the actors;*
- *A 'value-based' strategy, which depends on values and wider belief systems.*

My study however found a range of ten rhetorical strategies, detailed below:

1. Authority
2. Security
3. Shared values (internal and / or external)
4. Historical
5. Legal threat
6. Readiness
7. Resources
8. Time
9. Outside forces
10. Knowledge development.

Some of these rhetorical strategies have a clear crossover between Suddaby and Greenwood's (2005) paper, and others were not present at all. There is no replication of Suddaby and Greenwood's finding of an ontological strategy; nor were there findings that replicated Suddaby and Greenwood's arguments surrounding divine purpose. However, there were a number of areas of commonality and these included Suddaby and Greenwood's 'historical', 'cosmological' and 'values-based' strategies.

There may be implications surrounding the lack of complementary findings between this study and Suddaby and Greenwood's other 2 outcomes: for instance, ideas around divine purpose may be more common in America -

where many tend to be more religious than many in the UK. Likewise, ideas surrounding the ontological nature of their other rhetorical strategy may be as a result of the setting under which these rhetorical strategies were considered. For example, the context for this study was the banking and finance professions, examining cases of mergers going through the courts. Such a setting is particularly likely to lead to the employment of rhetorical strategies of a particularly high level theoretical and philosophical nature.

However, in addition to consideration of why the two explanations of rhetorical strategies differ, it is also worth noting that this thesis identifies a number of additional rhetorical strategies, namely the use of authority, security, legal threat, readiness, resources and knowledge development in order to persuade other actors to a particular way of thinking regarding a favoured worldview of legitimacy.

Legitimacy at the actor level may play in different ways, and central to the contribution in this respect is the eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing proposed towards the end of Chapter 6. The establishment of such a process leads to arguments that actors are not simply passive receivers of institutions but that rather, they seek to actively shape institutions via their own worldviews of legitimacy. As part of this argument, I propose in sections 6.8 and 6.9 a model of the process by which actors seek to engage in shaping the institutional environment surrounding them. I argue that they do this by engaging in the use of rhetorical strategies in order to seek to gain the support of others, in turn seeking to gain the momentum necessary to shape the direction of their organisational environment based on the perceived institutional shift they see surrounding the organisation.

Perhaps the closest model to this in the literature is that of Battilana et al., (2009), who propose a multi-level model of how actors seek to engage and shape institutions. Whilst Battilana et al.'s argument is that within institutions, a small number of actors possess the ability to shape and change the institutional make up, my argument is that any actor has the capacity to do this. Both Battilana et al., and the findings presented in this thesis argue that the

circumstances surrounding any potential move to influence needs to be right in order for an actor to achieve a successful intervention. In this thesis in particular, this relates to the need for one stage of the process to be met in order for the next stage to be achieved. My model proposes that under such circumstances, the rhetorical strategies associated with the actor's worldview of legitimacy are employed to seek to gain support from other actors. However, Battilana et al.'s argument goes further, arguing that there are more specific circumstances that come into play in order for actors to shape an institution. These include the actor having a clear vision for divergent change, and mobilising other actors around such a vision. There are some parallels here, in that attempting to bring others on board through the employment of rhetorical strategies may substitute for the idea of 'mobilising actors' and the actors' respective worldviews of legitimacy are likely to provide the basis for such a vision as asserted above.

Beyond comparisons with Battilana's work, it is also worth drawing comparisons between this study and Bitektine's (2011) model which also holds strong similarities to the research findings in this case. Bitektine sets out a model which describes how actors as evaluators of social judgements of organisations make decisions surrounding the legitimacy, status and reputation of a particular organisation. His model proposes that actors make judgements using two broad classes of legitimacy: cognitive legitimacy and socio-political legitimacy. He further asserts that in situations of uncertainty, actors will gravitate towards that which is familiar in form. In both of these assertions the research findings in this thesis differ from Bitektine, in that this study builds a much broader range of actor considerations of legitimacy in terms of their worldviews, and further, that the study does not establish that actors seek familiar structures at times of institutional shift. However, Bitektine does propose a model of the processes used by actors in order to consider 'social judgements' about organisations, and this model holds some similarities with the proposed eight stage process in that it establishes as part of the processes on board that actors may use the social context to influence their judgement - which is similar to the internal deliberations stage of the eight stage model. Further, Bitektine also argues for a stage whereby the actor seeks to use the knowledge of other

actors in order to help inform their legitimacy judgement: while conversely, in this study, actors seek to influence other actors.

#### 7.4 Key contributions of the model

In this section, I seek to explicitly highlight the key contributions that the model makes to the literature. I note two key contributions in particular: firstly, an eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing at the actor level, which is underpinned by the contribution of a typology of thirteen actor worldviews of legitimacy, their associated dominant value sets and the rhetorical strategies by which these worldviews are promoted and played out.

The first contribution to the literature is the furthering of knowledge on legitimacy by the presentation of a new typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy. This typology of legitimacy achieves three specific contributions that had limited coverage in the literature previously. The first of these is that the typology focuses on legitimacy at the actor level rather than at the institutional level: it identifies legitimacy as perceived by, and enacted by, actors. Such a study of legitimacy at the actor level has added understanding related not only to the broad range of ways in which actors may potentially view legitimacy, but also in terms of actor drivers for viewing legitimacy and their particular respective way, through their associated dominant value sets. Although there is some work available in respect of the body of literature relating to actor level legitimacy, building on this by establishing the key drivers of such worldviews of legitimacy through the actor's dominant value set provides a new dynamic within the literature and a second sub-contribution sitting within the wider contribution of the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy.

Finally in respect of legitimacy, this typology adds to the literature four categories of legitimacy that are believed to be new to the literature and not accounted for in previous characterisations of legitimacy. These are namely:

- strategic legitimacy
- opportunistic legitimacy

- pioneering legitimacy
- innovative legitimacy.

In doing so, the study broadens the understanding of how actors perceive ideas of legitimacy - and such a contribution may in turn also inform understandings of how actors respond to ideas of legitimacy.

The other key contribution of the study to the literature is to provide a model of an eight stage process by which actors seek to influence their organisational environment in the light of a perceived shift in the institutional environment surrounding the organisation. This process draws together ideas of dominant value sets and actor worldviews of legitimacy and builds on them through the employment of rhetorical strategies by which such worldviews are promoted. These rhetorical strategies build on Suddaby and Greenwood's (2005) work in relation to developing additional rhetorical strategies and adding depth of understanding to the ways in which they play out in practice, by the providing underpinning rationale for a broad range of actor worldviews of legitimacy that are used in order to inform such strategies.

This second contribution of the eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and formation also makes a wider contribution surrounding the voice of actors in shaping institutions. In particular, it provides a process for how and when actors use their worldviews of legitimacy as a particular frame to further their own perceptions of what the institution should be under the preferred legitimacy worldview, and how they seek to further that cause at times of institutional shift. This process develops the models offered by Battilana et al. (2009) in terms of providing a model that not only sets out a process by which actors seek to shape institutions but also sets out their rationale for doing so through their underpinning worldviews of legitimacy. Further, the study adds an additional dimension to the work of Bitektine (2011) in establishing the personal bases for legitimacy viewed at an actor level which may contribute to an actor seeking to shape their surrounding environment.

Through its voluntary sector setting as the context, the study also serves to develop debates in the voluntary sector relating to chargeable support services,

although this is arguably a secondary level contribution as the major contributions are situated in the body of work relating to institutional theory.

### 7.5 Limitations of the study

In this section, I seek to highlight the limitations of the study. In particular, there are four key limitations to or weaknesses of the study.

The first of these is that the study was only conducted in four LIOs. It is possible therefore for arguments to be made as to the general applicability of the findings, and to question whether the phenomena described in this thesis is applicable to LIOs undergoing change across the country. However, I seek to counter this by having an extensive data set consisting of a wide range of actors and experiences.

Secondly, the study - given its focus on legitimacy at the actor level - fails to account for other levels at which legitimacy is perceived, won, lost and challenged. For instance, the study does not account for ideas of legitimacy at the organisational level or even at the level of the organisational population or organisational field: it therefore contributes at only one level where legitimacy considerations play out.

Thirdly, the study does not account for actual changes in the institutional environment as a result of the legitimacy considerations made and played out by actor within the LIOs being studied. The focus of the study was much more on actor level perceptions and responses, and the ways in which actors themselves viewed legitimacy. The study therefore did not take into great account actual understandings of for instance, how charging played out in the broader institutional environment; only actor perceptions of this.

Fourthly, following on from this argument, the study does not account for perceptions within the institutional environment that were external to the organisation. For instance, there is some consideration of normative pressures

but it was taken as given that such normative pressures existed in the eyes of the actors, despite not necessarily having consideration for whether external bodies within the institutional environment perceived the existence of such.

Finally, the limitations may also include questions as to whether the study is too prescriptive as to the role of actors, particularly in reference to the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, and whether in reality the positions of actors are much more fluid and subjective. I counter this by arguing that in each category of actors within the typology, a number of actors from the field sat within the category, and therefore there was a clear evidence base for each category. However, I acknowledge that I only saw organisations that were in a time of flux by design in the methodology and further research could follow up from this in seeking to establish whether such categories are static or in flux. This is picked up in the recommendations for future research in Chapter 8.

## 7.6 Summary

In this chapter I sought to establish the theoretical contribution of the study to the literature. In particular, I contrasted the contribution of the study to two key areas of the literature: those studies relating directly to typologies of legitimacy; and those relating to actors and their role in shaping institutions in respect of ideas of legitimacy.

I find that despite a number of limitations to the study that include whether the study is too prescriptive, whether the findings are generalisable given the study was undertaken using only four LIOs, and the consideration of actors within the external environment, or legitimacy responses at the organisational or institutional level, the study makes two major contributions to the body of literature. The primary contribution is an eight stage process of legitimacy shaping an influencing which explains the ways in which actors perceive legitimacy and then use their worldviews of legitimacy to seek to shape their surrounding organisational environment at times of institutional shift. Such a contribution is underpinned by the contribution of a new typology of actor

worldviews of legitimacy, with particular note of four new types of legitimacy, the consideration of an underpinning dominant value set, and the focus on legitimacy at the actor level.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

I set out in this thesis to examine the role of actors within LIOs and the ways in which they consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy surrounding an institutional shift towards charging FLOs for support services. In this chapter I seek to provide a conclusion to the thesis. I begin in section 8.2 by summarising my empirical findings. In section 8.3 I examine the theoretical implications of the research and the associated contribution to knowledge arising from the study. In section 8.4 I examine the implications of the research for practice. In section 8.5 I then propose a number of recommendations for future research, and in section 8.6 I set out a short conclusion. Finally in section 8.7, I briefly outline my post viva reflections.

#### **8.2 Empirical findings**

To undertake the research I employed an institutional lens and a multi-sited ethnographical approach, with research being conducted over four individual LIO sites with six weeks spent at each site.

It is worth reflecting here before summarising the empirical findings that at various points during my time spent in the field, the debates relating to LIO moves into chargeable support services were significantly more heated than I imagined they may have been prior to arrival in the field. At points therefore, holding conversations with staff members and board members regarding such a transition proved to be emotionally challenging, both for myself as a researcher and for the research participants, who held strong feelings on both sides of the charging debate. In turn, a number of dramatic events played out during my time in the field. These included a staff member choosing to leave his job; another staff member taking voluntary redundancy as he did not agree with charging; one staff member walking out in tears, and a further staff member

taking prolonged sick leave due to stress - with each individual confiding in me personally that these situations arose as a result of debates surrounding chargeable support services.

Having stored and processed the data using NVivo 10, and having gone through nine revisions of a template analysis process in order to analyse the data, my core empirical finding is an eight stage process in respect of how actor worldviews of legitimacy play out against the backdrop of a shifting institutional environment. This eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing asserts that actors individually possess particular dominant value sets, which inform their worldview of what is, or what is not, legitimate. I argue that actors use these worldviews to inform their considerations of the legitimacy of their institutional environment on a day to day basis but that typically business as usual activities do not provide actors with an impetus to act. I then assert that actors at times of a shifting institutional backdrop perceive such a shift, and internal deliberations begin to occur accordingly. From here, actors take on what they perceive to be an opportunity to shape organisational direction within the institutional environment, and in doing so they seek to join together with like minded actors, and in doing so, influence as a collective rather than as individuals through the employment of various rhetorical strategies.

This eight stage process is informed and underpinned by a typology of thirteen different actor types according to their worldview of legitimacy - and the linked assertion that legitimacy is perceived in different ways by these thirteen actor types. Through this typology, I argue that each actor type has an underpinning dominant value set which informs their worldview of legitimacy, and that each actor type employs certain rhetorical strategies from a range of ten strategies established in the findings in order to argue for the promotion of their respective worldview of legitimacy. These then play out accordingly through the eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing. Further, through arguing for the thirteen worldviews of legitimacy set out in this typology, I also present four conceptions of legitimacy which are not believed to be addressed in the previous literature: that of strategic legitimacy, opportunistic legitimacy, pioneering legitimacy and innovative legitimacy.

### 8.3 Contribution to theory

In this section, I seek to explicitly highlight the key contribution to knowledge made by the research and the associated theoretical implications arising from it. The key contribution to knowledge brought about by this research is a picture of the contemporary changes surrounding LIOs in terms of moves towards chargeable support services and the ways in which actors within LIOs use ideas of legitimacy, through their legitimacy worldviews, as a vehicle for considering and responding to such institutional change towards charging.

In terms of painting a picture of legitimacy at an actor level within LIOs in respect of institutional shifts towards support for chargeable services, two key aspects of the research underpin this contribution to theory. These are namely the eight stage process of actor legitimacy shaping and influencing, and the underpinning typology of thirteen separate actor worldviews of legitimacy. Although both the eight stage process and the underpinning typology contribute directly to understandings of current moves within LIOs towards charging for support services, there are also a number of broader contributions made to the institutional literature relating to legitimacy.

In sections 8.3.1 and 8.3.2, I address individually the contribution of the research in terms of firstly the contemporary changes relating to charging within LIOs, and secondly, broader issues relating to legitimacy at the actor level within the institutional literature.

#### *8.3.1 Contemporary changes within LIOs in respect of moves towards chargeable support services*

The primary contribution to theory made by this research is that of bringing about an understanding of the changes currently happening within LIOs in respect of moves towards chargeable support services, from an actor level perspective. As mentioned above, there are two key aspects of the research within this thesis that come together to bring about such a contribution to

understanding the actor level perspective in relation to contemporary changes surrounding LIOs charging. Namely, these are the eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing, and the underpinning typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy, both of which are detailed in Chapter 6.

There is a range of literature already in existence within the field which relates to moves by LIOs towards chargeable support services. This literature ranges from early literature documenting the possibility of moves towards chargeable models (as documented in, for example, Harker and Burkeman (2007)), to later literature which considers the coalition government's possible direction in relation to local infrastructure, such as Macmillan (2011). Further literature considers the role of changes in the policy and funding environment surrounding LIOs in respect of their future direction and the wider policy context - see for example Rochester (2012), and Macmillan (2013).

There have also been a number of studies which have focused on specific frameworks and initiatives which have been set up to support or complement the institutional direction towards support for LIOs charging for support services. Such literature includes Macmillan and Ellis Paine's (2014) paper on the 'Building Capabilities for Impact and Legacy' initiative delivered by the Big Lottery Fund, and Munro and Mynott's (2014) paper on the Transforming Local Infrastructure initiative.

Taken collectively, such papers as those noted above clearly document, through a number of different focal points, moves within the wider funding and policy environment towards LIOs charging for support services. However, there is currently limited literature available that explores such moves towards LIOs charging from an actor level perspective. Specifically, this includes a lack of literature that deals with how moves towards charging are currently playing out through those actors situated directly within LIOs. It is this level at which the key research contribution is situated, in terms of providing a clear understanding of and contribution to the literature in relation to current moves into charging by LIOs, and how actors consider, construct and respond to what they perceive to be the legitimacy of such moves.

This contribution to theory is brought about by the coming together of two key aspects of the research findings. Firstly, the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy sets out the multiple ways in which actors within LIOs, against the backdrop of an institutional shift towards the endorsement of chargeable support services, may frame how they consider whether such moves into charging are legitimate, and may construct their own response accordingly. This typology then comes together with the eight stage process for legitimacy shaping and influencing which describes how the typology plays out by actors considering their own perceptions of and responses to legitimacy at times of such institutional shift. In turn, a clear picture is contributed to the literature as to the stages of shaping and influencing undertaken by actors in respect of their perceptions of the legitimacy of LIO moves into chargeable support.

This contribution to theory, in the coming together of the typology of worldviews of legitimacy and the eight stage process, builds on the current literature by bringing about a new perspective to the debates relating to contemporary changes in LIOs in terms of moves towards chargeable support services. This new perspective specifically relates to how these debates play out at an actor level with respect to consideration of the legitimacy of such moves towards charging, as opposed to the literature currently in existence, which tends to sit at a system level and address the debates from a macro perspective in ways that deal with issues such as funding and policy. The current research therefore contributes in a way that focuses on aspects of LIO moves towards chargeable support services that occur internally within the LIO, as opposed to those aspects relating to charging which occur externally within the environment surrounding the LIO.

### *8.3.2 Debates relating to legitimacy at the actor level within the institutional literature*

In addition to the key contribution made to the literature in relation to the contemporary changes occurring in respect of LIO moves into chargeable support services, the research also adds to the debates present within the body of institutional literature in relation to legitimacy, and specifically how ideas of legitimacy play out at the actor level. A number of studies already deal in some respects with ideas relating to legitimacy at the actor level (Beckert, 1999; Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005; George, Sitkin and Barden, 2006, Battilana et al, 2009; Bitektine, 2011), although each deals with different aspects of the research problem.

Arguably Bitektine's (2011) model provides close similarities to the eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing presented in this research, in terms of addressing the ways in which actors consider legitimacy and in turn the processes through which those legitimacy considerations play out. Here, however, Bitektine's considerations of how actors perceive and view legitimacy do not cover such an extensive array of conceptions of legitimacy through which actors consider their position in terms of responding to a shifting institutional environment. Bitektine argues that actors consider their legitimacy views through two broad conceptions of legitimacy: cognitive legitimacy based on known organisational forms and structural characteristics, and socio-political legitimacy based on prevailing social norms.

In terms of the specific contributions to the institutional literature made through the eight stage process arising from this research, the research findings further understanding relating to how actors consider and respond to ideas of legitimacy against a shifting institutional environment. This study also increases understanding in relation to the actor level links between ideas of legitimacy and a shifting institutional environment in terms of how actors may seek to shape their institutional environment at particular points. Further, the eight stage process introduces a broader context to currently established ideas of rhetorical

strategies arising in the literature (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005) and the events that may lead up to them being employed by actors.

The typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy can be seen to contribute across three specific areas of the institutional body of work relating to legitimacy. Firstly, it does so in terms of establishing a broad range of actor worldviews of legitimacy; secondly in arguing for the underpinning dominant value sets which inform said worldviews of legitimacy, and finally, in terms of establishing ten rhetorical strategies by which actors argue for their favoured worldview of legitimacy.

In establishing a range of thirteen actor worldviews of legitimacy, the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy arguably furthers debates in respect of understanding the ways in which legitimacy is viewed at the actor level. Although a small number of conceptions of legitimacy make reference to actors (for example, Kostova and Roth, 2002), the model presented in this study arguably extends current understandings of legitimacy at an actor level in terms of providing a dedicated model focusing on the types of legitimacy which actors use to view their judgement as to what is, and is not, legitimate. Other typologies of legitimacy typically pitch these legitimacy types at an institutional level, and where actors are referenced this is typically through consequence rather than a deliberate focus on legitimacy as viewed through the eyes of the actor. This is important in furthering debates relating to how actors view and use ideas of legitimacy in an attempt to shape institutions.

In respect of legitimacy types, this typology also adds to the literature four categories of legitimacy that are believed to be new to the literature and not accounted for in previous characterisations of legitimacy. These are:

- strategic legitimacy
- opportunistic legitimacy
- pioneering legitimacy
- innovative legitimacy.

Notably, three of these four legitimacy types can arguably be seen as 'proactive' views of legitimacy in viewing an action or direction as legitimate through a range of specific views which move the organisation into a new space. This therefore has implications for the body of theory in terms of understanding the implications for such proactive types of legitimacy in advancing institutions and organisational direction.

In establishing a range of dominant value sets which underpin the thirteen conceptions of actor worldviews of legitimacy, the typology also builds on ideas of actor level legitimacy in order to establish an understanding of actor motivations in considering legitimacy in the way they do. There appears to be limited reference to linkages between actor value sets and their responses to and considerations of legitimacy in the literature, although to some extent this is addressed through Creed, DeJordy and Lok (2010) who consider the linkages between the sense of self and the values of their institution, and the ways in which actors seek to mediate any potential conflicts in this respect in considering how they respond. This information therefore appears to contribute to the literature in terms of informing understandings of the reasons why actors go on to make particular judgements about legitimacy.

Further, the typology builds on and extends Suddaby and Greenwood's (2005) argument for five rhetorical strategies by which actors argue for their respective legitimacy positions. Within the typology I present ten rhetorical strategies, of which a number are complementary to Suddaby and Greenwood's strategies, but also a number of new rhetorical strategies which do not feature in Suddaby and Greenwood's (2005) model. This is important in informing theoretical understanding not only in regard to how actors argue for their preferred worldview of legitimacy, but also in explicitly linking particular worldviews of legitimacy with particular rhetorical strategies for the promotion of such.

#### 8.4 Implications for practice

Taking the debates surrounding chargeable support services and legitimacy outside of the implications for theory, there may be associated policy implications in line with the research. Below, I discuss three key areas where the study may hold implications for practice.

Firstly, there may be implications for practice with regards to the buy in of actors to chargeable support services at a service delivery level. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, this study saw emotions riding high in relation to debates surrounding charging and there were many actors and actor types established in the typology that did not consider charging for support services to be a legitimate direction. The implications here are that if actors view new directions such as charging through their own worldview of what is legitimate and what is not, there is the potential for actors to seek to 'rebel' against any potential charging direction being set by managers, the LIO's board, or at a higher level, policy makers. In the research evidence, this played out in a number of ways, from staff members sniping about decisions quietly through to staff members leaving their jobs. The latter comes with a serious risk attached that the very skills being charged for are no longer present in the organisation and therefore presents its own risks to the perceived legitimacy of chargeable support services. The overarching implication here is that in order to succeed in a move towards chargeable support services, buy in from actor groups across the board is important. Questions for future research may link to this in terms of how best to marry these divergent interests in order to achieve collective buy in, and if that is indeed possible.

Conversely, the alternative argument can be highlighted here in terms of implications for those within LIOs who do not wish to move into charging for support services. The eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing set out in Chapter 6 stipulates that when actors perceive a shift in the institutional environment, they seek to influence it according to their own worldviews of legitimacy. For those seeking to achieve the preservation of the status quo, specifically in this instance not charging for support services, there

is an argument for attempting to exercise control over the 'window of opportunity' for legitimacy influencing against a shifting institutional backdrop, particularly in terms of actor perceptions that such a window of opportunity for influencing may be opening.

From a managerial perspective, such control of a window of opportunity in order to maintain the philanthropic tradition of provision of services free at the point of use could take the form of strict control around organisational narratives relating to the institutional environment or strict positioning of the organisation within such an institutional environment. Alternatively, those seeking to maintain services in a non chargeable capacity could seek to pre-empt the window of opportunity within which actors seek to influence through their own legitimacy worldviews by acting to establish an organisational position at an early stage, in turn removing the uncertainty against which actors perceive their window of opportunity through which to influence. The overarching principle relating to such an approach would be to prevent a multiplicity of voices seeking to influence arguments about which direction is or is not legitimate by avoiding a situation in which a shift in the institutional environment appears to hold significant implications for organisational stability or direction.

The second practice implication relates to the need for those with an interest in bringing about change in respect of a chargeable services agenda to consider the careful management of the transition from provision of services free at the point of use to chargeable support services. In particular, this links to the idea that at times of institutional shift, actors perceive that a window of opportunity opens up by which they can seek to influence the institutional environment as a result of the instability associated with the shifting narrative. As such, in order for moves into chargeable support services to be successful for policy makers, managers and key players within the organisational field, there may be a need to seek a transition that is smooth and minimises instability, in turn minimising the opportunity for such a window to open up and potentially be utilised by actors within the organisation according to their own worldviews of legitimacy.

The third key implication for practice in relation to chargeable support services relates to the idea that just because a particular direction or policy is favoured at a high level within the organisational field, this does not mean that it plays out easily at the actor level. With respect to chargeable services, what appeared to be a widely endorsed narrative in the organisational field resulted in many difficulties between actors with competing worldviews of legitimacy and how those competing worldviews of legitimacy played out when actors commenced down the path towards delivering chargeable support services. The implication is therefore that an approach which takes account of the multiplicity of voices involved may be more likely to gain legitimacy at the actor level from the outset.

### 8.5 Recommendations for future research

The recommendations for future research can be grouped into five key areas: ideas relating to actor worldviews of legitimacy; to actor dominant value sets; to the employment of rhetorical strategies, to the actor level pursuit of institutional change through their worldviews of legitimacy, and finally, to LIOs charging for support services.

In respect of legitimacy, a clear direction for further research is in respect of the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy that has been established. In particular, there is a need to ensure full understanding of legitimacy at the actor level across a broad range of settings. Questions for future research include, but are not limited to:

- The relative 'strength' of each worldview of legitimacy in terms of both support for such a worldview and whether some actor types are more easily able to use their worldview to shape and influence institutional direction than others;
- Whether there are particular worldviews of legitimacy which dominate others and conversely, those which do not;
- If there are some situations in which actors step out of their worldviews in order to achieve consensus in respect of legitimacy, and what the parameters of those situations might be;

- Whether said worldviews of legitimacy have a role beyond the constraints of a shifting institutional environment;
- Whether particular worldviews of legitimacy are static and stay with the actors throughout their institutional life, or whether they flux and can be shaped; and
- If they can be shaped, what the causes of such shaping might be.

In relation to the dominant value sets underpinning each respective worldview, questions which warrant further research include:

- The reasons for actors favouring one set of values over another;
- To what extent an institution may influence a dominant value set;
- To what extent actor dominant value sets remain static or to what extent they are in flux;
- The ways in which dominant value sets held by actors interact with other values held by the actors in their peer group.

Questions which may provide a basis for further research in terms of rhetorical strategies include:

- Whether further rhetorical strategies exist beyond those established in this study;
- Whether the use of rhetorical strategies varies not only based on actor type but also the situations in which they are employed or the outcome that the actor is seeking;
- The extent to which the varying rhetorical strategies identified are effective in persuasion;
- The extent to which rhetorical strategies employed by actors go on to shape the institutional environment.

Further research direction may also be considered in terms of the impact of actor worldviews of legitimacy in terms of their ability to influence the institutional environment. In this regard, whilst in this thesis I argued for an eight stage process through which actors seek to use their legitimacy worldviews in order to influence the institutional environment, my study does not concentrate on the nature of the institutional environment in itself. Therefore

there are questions to be addressed as to what extent actors are successful in managing to influence the institutional environment.

Finally, in respect of the debates that this study addresses specific to LIOs charging for support services, a number of future research directions are set out below:

- Consideration of the readiness and ability of LIOs to charge for services against the current institutional backdrop.
- Exploration of the character of chargeable support services - which charging models work and which do not, and how are they playing out within LIOs?
- Consideration of the linkages of actor perceptions of legitimacy with the broader institutional environment: how do such perceptions of legitimacy impact on the interplay between LIOs and the organisations and bodies sitting within the broader institutional field?

Overall, there are a number of possible directions for future research and these can be seen to cover five key areas of legitimacy, dominant value sets, rhetorical strategies, institutional shifts, and finally, the chargeable support services debate within LIOs.

## 8.6 Conclusion

In this study, I set out to answer the following research question:

*How do actors within local infrastructure organisations consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy surrounding an institutional shift towards charging front line organisations for support services?*

Using the findings from a multi-sited ethnography, I argue that actors within LIOs view legitimacy through thirteen different 'worldviews of legitimacy', which are underpinned by an associated dominant value set, and which are promoted through the employment of ten different rhetorical strategies. The typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy underpins an eight stage process by which actors

can be seen to employ their worldview of legitimacy in a bid to shape their institutional environment at times of a shift towards chargeable support services.

The key contributions to knowledge are the eight stage process of legitimacy shaping and influencing, and the underpinning actor typology of legitimacy. In identifying these two models, I have addressed the research question in establishing the ways in which actors within LIOs consider, construct and respond to ideas of legitimacy surrounding an institutional shift towards charging for support services. Although this research is set in the context of chargeable support services, the eight stage process and the actor typology of worldviews of legitimacy can arguably apply to actors within any organisation facing a shifting institutional backdrop.

### 8.7 Post viva reflections

Following the initial submission of this thesis and my viva that followed, I would like to use this section to add a number of points of reflection and clarifications in respect of the content of this thesis. Specifically, these relate to three broad areas: firstly, the naming of the overarching categories held within the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy (Table 6D); secondly, the nature of the fluidity of such categories, and finally, reflections on my own positioning in relation to those categories.

In respect of the overarching terms used to describe each of the actor types set out within the typology of actor worldviews of legitimacy in Table 6D, my examiners felt that the language used in some of the 'overarching terms' used to describe the actor types did not necessarily fully represent the characteristics of that actor type. Examples given in this respect included the authoritarian, the contentious objector, the submissive and the progressive.

Following these comments I have reflected not on those specific overarching terms but the terms used across the board as a collective and the consistency across them in terms of the meaning that they convey. In coming back to these with a more critical view, some of these titles reflected the worldviews contained within the typology (for example, the survivor); others reflected the dominant value set (for example, the leader), and others reflected the strategies used to promote the actors' worldview of legitimacy (for example, the authoritarian). In reflecting on whether the overarching terms should change, I have looked to align the approach consistently and label actors according to a combination of their worldview and dominant value set, as the rhetorical strategies employed by the actors appear simply to follow from such worldviews. In Table 8A below I have set out my reflections on each of the overarching terms, if they should change, and if so, why.

**Table 8A: Reflections on overarching terms used within typology**

| <b>Previous term</b>     | <b>Proposed new term</b> | <b>Comments</b>   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| The authoritarian        | The traditionalist       | This would bring the term into line with this actor type's dominant value set of valuing internal norms, routines and traditions, and historical worldview. In turn it would move away from primarily reflecting the rhetorical strategies employed by this actor type. |
| The resistor             | The idealist             | This move aims to reflect this actor type having a strong moral compass and a worldview that is framed by consideration of morality and ethics. The previous overarching term instead reflected the propensity of this actor type to resist moves towards charging.     |
| The contentious objector | The law enforcer         | The shift in this overarching term is designed to reflect the strong legislative and regulatory basis of the worldview of this actor type and move away from the behaviour characteristics associated with such a worldview.  |

|                          |                 |  |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--|
| The quiet dissenter      | The compliant   | This move again aims to reflect the combination of worldview and underpinning dominant value set of this actor type, rather than the behaviours which may stem from such worldviews or dominant value sets. Here this new terms seeks to demonstrate that this actor type favours compliance with perceived authority. |
| The strategist           | Stays the same  | I have kept this overarching term the same given that it already reflects the both a dominant value set and legitimacy worldview which favour strategic frameworks and documents.  |
| The submissive           | The conciliator | Again, I have proposed a move in this as submissive behaviours referenced in the originally proposed typology stem from the conciliatory characteristics of actors with this worldview of legitimacy. I have therefore moved towards encompassing these characteristics to more accurately reflect the actor grouping. |
| The pragmatist           | Stays the same  | I have kept this overarching term the same as I believe that it sufficiently represents the practically focused nature of this actor grouping in both dominant value set and worldview of legitimacy.  |
| The team player          | Stays the same  | As above, I have also kept this overarching term the same as the nature of the 'team player' descriptor brings about a focus on relationships within a broader team, which is key to the worldview of this actor.  |
| The reputation conscious | Stays the same  | Again in relation to this overarching term, I propose to leave this as per its original form, as I believe that the description relating to being reputation conscious brings about a focus on the normative worldview within this actor group which is  |

|                 |                  |  |
|-----------------|------------------|--|
|                 |                  | informed by a value set that places a high weight on external perceptions of the organisation.   |
| The survivor    | Stays the same   | This overarching term also remains the same as it sufficiently reflects the survival based worldview of this actor type.   |
| The opportunist | Stays the same   | I have chosen to keep this overarching term the same as again I believe that it fully sums up the opportunistic nature of this actor group which is also expressed clearly in the corresponding worldview of legitimacy.   |
| The leader      | Stays the same   | This is the final overarching term which I have chosen to keep in its current form, having done so because my belief is that this term fully reflects the dominant value set held by this actor group in terms of valuing leadership of the sector, and the 'pioneering' worldview of legitimacy associated with it. |
| The progressive | The entrepreneur | In this final category, I have changed the overarching term to make more explicit the propensity of this actor grouping to favour innovation and advancing practice.   |

The second aspect of the typology on which post viva clarity may be helpful is the extent of the relative fluidity of these categories. Throughout my analysis, it became apparent that there was a clear basis in the evidence for these categories of actor worldviews of legitimacy and their associated dominant value sets and rhetorical strategies. At the point in my analysis in which I was establishing this typology, there were very few actors who did not clearly fit in to one of these groupings. However, this research by its very nature as a multi-sited ethnography provides a 'snapshot' in time at a critical point and there is potential for future research to cast light on the fluidity of these categories over time.

I suspect that over time actors may move between categories, particularly in areas where the underpinning dominant value sets are close to each other and complementary (for example, between the team player and the reputation conscious, or the leader and the entrepreneur). This may depend on changes in their own circumstances which lead to changes in their dominant values sets and in turn re-frame their worldview. However, whilst I suspect that there may indeed be such fluidity between these categories over time, to make these claims explicitly would fall outside the bounds of my current data set and would require further research conducted on a longitudinal basis in order to establish this evidentially.

The final area of post viva reflection to note here is to establish my own positioning in relation to these categories. I identify best with the 'survivor' category here. I tend to believe that against a backdrop of fewer grants being available to LIOs and funding sources moving in new directions, it is practical to look at other sources of income generation in order to secure the financial stability of the charity, in turn seeking to protect the long term future of LIO service provision for the FLOs that it was set up to support.

## References

Adler, P. A. and Adler, P. (1987). Membership roles in field research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Agar, M. H. (1996). The professional stranger: An informal introduction to ethnography. Waltham, MA: Academic Press.

Alcock, P. (2010). "Building the Big Society: a new policy environment for the third sector in England." Voluntary Sector Review **1**(3): 379-389.

Aldrich, H. E. and Fiol, C. M. (1994). "Fools rush in? The institutional context of industry creation." Academy of management review **19**(4): 645-670.

Anonymous (Undated). Thomas Hancock Nunn: The life and work of a social reformer written by his friends for his friends. London: Baines and Scarbrook.

Asad, T. (1994). "Ethnographic representation, statistics and modern power." Social Research **61**(1) 55-88.

Barron, D. N. (1998). "Pathways to legitimacy among consumer loan providers in New York City, 1914-1934." Organization Studies **19**(2): 207-233.

Battilana, J., Bernard, L. and Boxebaum, E. (2009). "How actors change institutions: towards a theory of institutional entrepreneurship." The academy of management annals **3**(1): 65-107.

Bazeley, P. and Richards, L. (2000). The NVivo qualitative project book, London: Sage.

Beckert, J. (1999). "Agency, entrepreneurs, and institutional change. The role of strategic choice and institutionalized practices in organizations." Organization Studies **20**(5): 777-799.

Bennett, R. and Savani, S. (2011). "Surviving mission drift: How charities can turn dependence on government contract funding to their own advantage." Nonprofit Management and Leadership **22**(2): 217-231.

Berger, P. L. and Luckmann, T. (1967). The Construction of Reality: A treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Anchor Books.

Bhaskar, R. (1978). "On the possibility of social scientific knowledge and the limits of naturalism." Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour **8**(1): 1-28

Big Lottery Fund (2011). Transforming Local Infrastructure guidance notes. London: Big Lottery Fund.

Big Lottery Fund (2012). Building Capabilities for Impact and Legacy. London: Big Lottery Fund

Bitektine, A. (2011). "Toward a theory of social judgments of organizations: The case of legitimacy, reputation, and status." Academy of management review **36**(1): 151-179.

Brasnett, M. E. (1969). Voluntary Social Action: A History of the National Council of Social Service, 1919-1969, London: National Council of Social Service.

Brooks, J. and King, N. (2012). Qualitative psychology in the real world: the utility of template analysis. Paper presented at British Psychological Society Annual Conference.

Buckingham, H., Ellis Paine, A., Alcock, P., Kendall, J. and Macmillan, R. (2014). "Who's speaking for whom? Exploring issues of third sector leadership, leverage and legitimacy", TSRC Working Paper 121, <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/tsrc/documents/tsrc/working-papers/working-paper-121.pdf>.

Bullock, A. Stallybrass, O., Trombley, S., and Eadie, B. (1977). The Fontana dictionary of modern thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Burridge, D. (1990). What local groups need. London: NCVO.

Cabinet Office (2010). Supporting a Stronger Civil Society. London: Cabinet Office.

Channel 4 (2006-12) 'The Secret Millionaire'. Channel 4.

Charity Commission (2014). Public benefit: rules for charities. Retrieved 7th April 2015, 2015 from <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-benefit-rules-for-charities>.

Chohan, S. (2009). Impact of the economic downturn on the VCS in the East Midlands region. Nottingham, UK: One East Midlands.

Cornforth, C. (2014). "Understanding and combating mission drift in social enterprises." Social Enterprise Journal **10**(1): 3-20.

Crabtree, A. (1998). Ethnography in participatory design. Proceedings of the 1998 Participatory design Conference: Citeseer.

Creed, W. D., DeJordy, R. and Lok, J. (2010). "Being the change: Resolving institutional contradiction through identity work." Academy of management journal **53**(6): 1336-1364.

Crowe, M., Dayson, C. and Wells, P. (2010). "Prospects for the Third Sector." People, Place & Policy Online **4**(1): 29-32.

Czarniawska-Joerges, B. (1989). "The wonderland of public administration reforms." Organization Studies **10**(4): 531-548.

Dayson, C. (2011). "The personalisation agenda: implications for organisational development and capacity building in the voluntary sector." Voluntary Sector Review **2**(1): 97-105.

Deephouse, D. L. (1996). "Does isomorphism legitimate?" Academy of management journal **39**(4): 1024-1039.

Deephouse, D. L. and Suchman, M. (2008). "Legitimacy in organizational institutionalism." The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism **49**: 77.

Dewey, J. (1929/1960). The quest for certainty. New York: Capricorn Books

Dewey, J. (1929). The sources of a science of education. New York : Horace Liveright.

Díez-Martín, F., Prado-Román, C., & Blanco-González, A. (2013). "Beyond legitimacy: legitimacy types and organizational success." Management Decision **51**(10): 1954-1969.

DiMaggio, P. and Powell, W. W. (1983). "The iron cage revisited: Collective rationality and institutional isomorphism in organizational fields." American Sociological Review **48**(2): 147-160.

DiMaggio, P. J. and Powell, W. W. (1991). The new institutionalism in organizational analysis, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Dornbusch, S. M. and Scott, W. R. (1975). Evaluation and the exercise of authority: A theory of control applied to diverse organizations. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Dowling, J. and Pfeffer, J. (1975). "Organizational legitimacy: Social values and organizational behavior." Pacific sociological review **18**(1): 122-136.

Dutton, J. E. and Dukerich, J. M. (1991). "Keeping an eye on the mirror: Image and identity in organizational adaptation." Academy of management journal **34**(3): 517-554.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Jackson, P. (2012). Management research, 4th edition. London: Sage.

Eisenhardt, K. M., Furr, N. R., & Bingham, C. B. (2010). "Crossroads: Microfoundations of performance: Balancing efficiency and flexibility in dynamic environments." Organization Science **21**(6): 1263-1273.

Ellis Paine, A., Taylor, R., & Alcock, P. (2012). 'Wherever there is money there is influence': exploring BIG's impact on the third sector. Birmingham, UK: Third Sector Research Centre.

Escadale, W. (2008). Infrastructure for the local third sector. Sheffield, UK: NAVCA.

Felin, T., Foss, N., Heimeriks, K. and Madsen, T. (2012). "Microfoundations of routines and capabilities: Individuals, processes, and structure." Journal of Management Studies **49**(8): 1351-1374.

Fine, G. A., Morrill, C., and Surianarain, S. (2009). Ethnography in Organizational Settings. London: Sage

- Foreman, P. and Whetten D. A. (2002). "Members' identification with multiple-identity organizations." Organization Science **13**(6): 618-635.
- Freeman, B. (2010). Rethinking infrastructure services and funding advice. Sheffield, UK: NAVCA
- Froelich, K. A. (1999). "Diversification of revenue strategies: Evolving resource dependence in nonprofit organizations." Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly **28**(3): 246-268.
- Galaskiewicz, J. (1985). "Interorganizational relations." Annual review of sociology **11**(1): 281-304.
- Gavetti, G. (2005). "Cognition and hierarchy: Rethinking the microfoundations of capabilities' development." Organization Science **16**(6): 599-617.
- George, E., Chattopadhyay, P., Sitkin, S. B., & Barden, J. (2006). "Cognitive underpinnings of institutional persistence and change: A framing perspective." Academy of management review **31**(2): 347-365.
- Golant, B. D. and Sillince J. A. (2007). "The constitution of organizational legitimacy: A narrative perspective." Organization Studies **28**(8): 1149-1167.
- Gold, R. L. (1958). "Roles in sociological field observations." Social forces **36**(3): 217-223.
- Gollop, R., Whitby, E., Buchanan, D., & Ketley, D. (2004). "Influencing sceptical staff to become supporters of service improvement: a qualitative study of doctors' and managers' views." Quality and Safety in Health Care **13**(2): 108-114.
- Goodwin, D., Pope, C., Mort, M., & Smith, A. (2003). "Ethics and ethnography: An experiential account." Qualitative Health Research **13**(4): 567-577.
- Hammersley, M. (2006). "Ethnography: problems and prospects." Ethnography and education **1**(1): 3-14.
- Hannan, M. T. and Freeman, J. (1977). "The population ecology of organizations." American journal of sociology **82**(5): 929-964.

James, W. (1907). Pragmatism. Dover: Dover publications.

James, W. (1909). Report on Mrs. Piper's Hodgson-control. Dover: Dover publications.

Johnson, A. (1987). "The death of ethnography." The Sciences **27**(2): 24-31.

Johnson, J. and Holub, M. (2003). "Corporate flight: moving "offshore" to avoid US taxes." Journal of Financial Crime **10**(3): 246-254.

Johnson, J. C. (1990). Selecting ethnographic informants, Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Junker, B. H. and Hughes, E. C. (1960). Field work: An introduction to the social sciences. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kendall, J. (2000). "The mainstreaming of the third sector into public policy in England in the late 1990s: whys and wherefores." Policy & politics **28**(4): 541-562.

Kent, G. (2000). "Understanding the experiences of people with disfigurements: an integration of four models of social and psychological functioning." Psychology, health & medicine **5**(2): 117-129.

King, N. (2004). "Using Template Analysis in the Thematic Analysis of the Text" in Essential Guide to Qualitative Methods in Organizational Research. C. S. Cassell, G. London, UK: Sage.

King, N. (2012). "Doing template analysis" in Qualitative organizational research: Core methods and current challenges C. S. Cassell, G. London, UK: Sage.

King, N., Thomas, K., & Bell, D. (2003). "An out-of-hours protocol for community palliative care: practitioners' perspectives." International Journal of Palliative Nursing **9**(7): 277-282.

Kostova, T. and Roth, K. (2002). "Adoption of an organizational practice by subsidiaries of multinational corporations: Institutional and relational effects." Academy of management journal **45**(1): 215-233.

- Kostova, T. and Zaheer, S. (1999). "Organizational legitimacy under conditions of complexity: The case of the multinational enterprise." Academy of management review **24**(1): 64-81.
- Kreutzer, K. (2009). "Nonprofit governance during organizational transition in voluntary associations." Nonprofit Management and Leadership **20**(1): 117-133.
- Leblebici, H., Salancik, G. R., Copay, A., and King, T. (1991). "Institutional change and the transformation of interorganizational fields: An organizational history of the US radio broadcasting industry." Administrative science quarterly: 333-363.
- Lewis, J. (2005). "New Labour's approach to the voluntary sector: independence and the meaning of partnership." Social Policy and Society **4**(02): 121-131.
- Lok, J. (2010). "Institutional logics as identity projects." Academy of management journal **53**(6): 1305-1335.
- Macmillan, R. (2006). "A rapid evidence assessment of the benefits of voluntary and community sector infrastructure." Report for the Infrastructure National Partnership. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Hallam University.
- Macmillan, R. (2007). "Understanding the idea of 'grant dependency' in the voluntary and community sector." People, places and policy online **1**(1): 30-38.
- Macmillan, R. (2011). "'Supporting' the voluntary sector in an age of austerity: the UK coalition government's consultation on improving support for frontline civil society organisations in England." Voluntary Sector Review **2**(1): 115-124.
- Macmillan, R. (2013). "Demand-led capacity building, the Big Lottery Fund and market-making in third sector support services." Voluntary Sector Review **4**(3): 385-394.
- Macmillan, R., Morgan, G., & Pearson, S. (2007). Building effective local VCS infrastructure. Sheffield, UK: NAVCA
- Macmillan, R. and Ellis Paine, A. (2014). Building Capabilities in the voluntary sector: what the evidence tells us. Birmingham, UK, TSRC.

- Malachowski, A. (2010). The new pragmatism. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press
- Marcus, G. E. (1995). "Ethnography in/of the world system: The emergence of multi-sited ethnography." Annual review of anthropology. Volume **24**: 95-117.
- Maurer, J. G. (1971). Readings in Organization Theory: Open-System Approaches. New York: Random House.
- McDowall, A. and Saunders, M. N. (2010). "UK managers' conceptions of employee training and development." Journal of European Industrial Training **34**(7): 609-630.
- Mead, G. H. (1934). Mind, self and society from the standpoint of a social behaviourist. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Meyer, J. W. (1983). "Conclusion: Institutionalization and the rationality of formal organizational structure" in Organizational environments: Ritual and rationality. J.W. Meyer, W. R. Scott Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Meyer, J. W. and Rowan, B. (1977). "Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony." American journal of sociology **83**(2): 340-363.
- Meyer, J. W. and Scott, W. R. (1983). "Centralization and the legitimacy problems of local government." in Organizational environments: Ritual and rationality. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage
- Misak, C. (2007). New Pragmatists. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Morgan, G. G. (2012). "Public benefit and charitable status: assessing a 20-year process of reforming the primary legal framework for voluntary activity in the UK." Voluntary Sector Review **3**(1): 67-91.
- Munro, E. and Mynott, B. (2014). Analysis of transforming local infrastructure. Sheffield, UK: NAVCA.
- Nadai, E. and C. Maeder (2005). Fuzzy fields. Multi-sited ethnography in sociological research. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research.

National Audit Office (2009). The Impact of ChangeUp on Support and Frontline Organisations. London: National Audit Office.

NAVCA (2006). NAVCA performance standards for local support and development organisations. Sheffield, UK: NAVCA.

Northmore, S., Pearson, S., Morgan, G., & Taylor, M. (2003). An Evaluation of Community Fund Grant Making to Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Organisations. Sheffield: Sheffield Hallam University

Oliver, C. (1991). "Strategic responses to institutional processes." Academy of management review **16**(1): 145-179.

Osborne, S. P. (2000). "Reformulating Wolfenden? The roles and impact of Local Development Agencies in supporting voluntary and community action in the UK." Local Government Studies **26**(4): 23-48.

Osborne, S. P., Beattie, R., & Williamson, A. (2006). "The impact of local voluntary and community sector infrastructure on community involvement in rural regeneration partnerships." Public Money and Management **26**(4): 235-242.

Osborne, S. P. and Tricker, M. (1994). "Local development agencies: Supporting voluntary action." Nonprofit Management and Leadership **5**(1): 37-51.

Parsons, T. (1934/1990). "Prolegomena to a theory of social institutions." American Sociological Review Volume **55**: 319-339.

Parsons, T. (1951). The social system. New York: The Free Press.

Parsons, T. (1960a). Structure and Processes in Modern Societies. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press.

Parsons, T. (1960b). "Some ingredients of a general theory of formal organization." in Structure and Process in Modern Societies. T. Parsons. Glencoe, IL: Free press.

OPM / Compass Partnership (2004b). Working towards an infrastructure strategy for the voluntary and community sector. London: OPM / Compass

Partnership.

Peirce, C. S. (1878). "How to make our ideas clear." Popular Science Monthly **January 1878 volume**.

Pope, J. A., Isely, E. S., & Asamoah-Tutu, F. (2009). "Developing a marketing strategy for nonprofit organizations: An exploratory study." Journal of Nonprofit & public sector marketing **21(2)**: 184-201.

Punch, M. (1994). "Politics and ethics in qualitative research." in Handbook of qualitative research N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Putnam, H. (1994). "Sense, nonsense, and the senses: An inquiry into the powers of the human mind." The Journal of Philosophy **91(9)**: 445-517.

Rochester, C. (2012). "Councils for Voluntary Service: the end of a long road?" Voluntary Sector Review **3(1)**: 103-110.

Rorty, R. (1979). "Transcendental arguments, self-reference, and pragmatism" in Transcendental arguments and science P. Bieri, R. Hortsman and L. Kruger Dordrecht: Reidel

Rorty, R. (1982). Consequences of pragmatism: Essays, 1972-1980, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Ruef, M. and Scott, W. R. (1998). "A multidimensional model of organizational legitimacy: Hospital survival in changing institutional environments." Administrative science quarterly **43(4)**: 877-904.

Salancik, G. R. and Pfeffer, J. (1978). "A social information processing approach to job attitudes and task design." Administrative science quarterly **23(2)**: 224-253.

Sayer, A. (1981). "Abstraction: a realist interpretation." Radical Philosophy **28(6-15)**.

Scott, W. R. (1995). Institutions and organizations, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Scott, W. R. (2008). "Approaching adulthood: the maturing of institutional theory." Theory and Society **37(5)**: 427-442.

- Seo, M.-G. and Creed, W. D. (2002). "Institutional contradictions, praxis, and institutional change: A dialectical perspective." Academy of management review **27**(2): 222-247.
- Stafford, J. (2012). "Recession, resilience, resources... and relationships." Voluntary Sector Review **3**(2): 257-263.
- Stewart, A. (1998). The ethnographer's method, London UK: Sage.
- Stinchcombe, A. L. (1987). Constructing social theories, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Strathern, M. (1992). Reproducing the future: essays on anthropology, kinship and the new reproductive technologies, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Stratton, P., McGovern, M., Wetherell, A., & Farrington, C. (2006). "Family therapy practitioners researching the reactions of practitioners to an outcome measure." Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy **27**(4): 199-207.
- Strauss, A. L. and Corbin, J. M. (1990). "Basics of qualitative research". Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Suchman, M. C. (1995). "Managing legitimacy: Strategic and institutional approaches." Academy of management review **20**(3): 571-610.
- Suddaby, R. and Greenwood, R. (2005). "Rhetorical strategies of legitimacy." Administrative science quarterly **50**(1): 35-67.
- Synge, M. (2015) The 'new' public benefit requirement: making sense of charity law? Hart Publishing: Oxford
- Taylor, M. and Warburton, D. (2003). "Legitimacy and the role of UK third sector organizations in the policy process." Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations **14**(3): 321-338.
- Thelen, K. A., Longstreth, F., & Steinmo, S (1992). Structuring politics: Historical institutionalism in comparative analysis, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Thornton, R. J. (1988). "The rhetoric of ethnographic holism." Cultural Anthropology **3**(3): 285-303.
- Third Sector Research Centre (2009). Evaluation of ChangeUp 2004 to 2008. Birmingham, UK: Third Sector Research Centre.
- Tversky, A. and Kahneman, D. (1974). "Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases." Science **185**(4157): 1124-1131.
- Watson, T. J. (2011). "Ethnography, reality, and truth: The vital need for studies of 'how things work' in organizations and management." Journal of Management Studies **48**(1): 202-217.
- Weber, M. (1978). Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology, Thousand Oaks, CA: University of California Press.
- Van Maanen, J. (1988). Tales of the field: On writing ethnography. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press
- Wilding, K. (2010). "Voluntary organisations and the recession." Voluntary Sector Review **1**(1): 97-101.
- Wolcott, H. F. (1990). "Making a study "more ethnographic"." Journal of Contemporary Ethnography **19**(1): 44-72.
- Wolfenden, J. (1978). The future of voluntary organisations: report of the Wolfenden Committee, London: Croom Helm Ltd.
- Zimmerman, B. and Dart, R. (1998). Charities doing commercial ventures: Societal and organizational implications. Toronto, Canada: Trillium Foundation
- Zucker, L. G. (1983). "Organizations as institutions." Research in the Sociology of Organizations **2**(1): 1-47.
- Zucker, L. G. (1987). "Institutional theories of organization." Annual review of sociology. Volume **13**: 443-464.
- Zucker, L. G. (1991). "Postscript: Microfoundations of institutional thought." in The new institutionalism in organizational analysis W.W. Powell and P.J DiMaggio. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Zucker, L. G., et al. (1998). "Geographically localized knowledge: spillovers or markets?" Economic Inquiry **36**(1): 65.

Zyglidopoulos, S. C. (2003). "The issue life-cycle: Implications for reputation for social performance and organizational legitimacy." Corporate Reputation Review **6**(1): 70-81.

## Appendix A

### Comparison of the themes arising from the two exploratory interviews

| Theme arising   | Peter's perspective (umbrella organisation)   | Alex's perspective (funding body)   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>The role of other organisations in moves towards chargeable support services</b> | <p><i>"Local infrastructure organisations have been written out of the scripts and the best they can hope for is to be on the menu [of local authority providers], but the menu is of named people, not organisations, and you can only offer a handful of things on the menu. So the idea that you might offer comprehensive support to meet a range of needs has disappeared as well."</i></p>  | <p><i>"An interesting question is surrounding whose terms to use to judge whether the model is a successful one: that's certainly created some very difficult conversations with local infrastructure in the short term. I'm not sure if it's judged to be a success on the local authority's terms, which may or may not be the terms of the local infrastructure, I'm sure other authorities will bring that up."</i></p>   |
| <b>Skills development needs for LIOs</b>  | <p><i>"There's a lot of talk around the need to improve marketing skills, and not just around the promotion but around how do I design products and services in a different way. Again if you look at grant funding, the state has picked up the tab for a lot of people's experimentation with new and different services. I could get it wrong. I could spend as much time on it as is required to get it right. I could pilot it. I didn't necessarily need to think about how feasible it was in terms of generating enough customers to make it viable. But if I'm going to pick up the tab for my own experimentation and exploration, then I need to work in a different way."</i></p> | <p><i>"And I think very few infrastructure organisations at the moment are ones which really have those [business planning] skills, there's a big growth area there and for all the cuts there's still a lot of money going into the voluntary sector overall so there's a lot of potential to get some of that money for capacity building. But when I say capacity building I don't mean capacity building for the groups on the front line, I mean for local infrastructure themselves. They'll need to invest in their own skills if they're going to pull off the move to demand-led."</i></p> |
| <b>Risk of mission</b>  | <p><i>"People [are] running community</i></p>   | <p><i>"There's a risk that some [LIOs] will</i></p>   |

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <p><b>drift</b></p>                                     | <p><i>transport schemes or Surestart centres – things that you wouldn't say are infrastructure”.</i></p>   | <p><i>try to put it into the narrative about what their organisation does and what it's there for... I think most people are trying to write it into the script of why it's part of their mission, when in reality they're just chasing the money”.</i></p>   |
| <p><b>Public benefit requirement in charity law</b></p> | <p><i>“Um, I haven't really thought about it... In fact I've never thought about it. I think given that lots of charities have always charged including private schools, then you know, I don't think this is a move to CVS' charging for services is going to bring about a rethink about what charitable benefit means.”</i></p>   | <p><i>“Is it [public benefit] an issue? That's not something which came up in the consultation responses. That's a very interesting point. What did come up is that some constitutions specify that they can only offer services in particular areas, and that's then a bit... constraining. So... their constitutions might not allow them to let organisations from neighbouring areas pay them for services, so that's quite constraining, in particular if you're in a small district council you've got a small market. I think there are some legal issues to be considered, I guess public benefit might be one of them but I've never thought about that really.”</i></p> |
| <p><b>Collaboration vs competition</b></p>              | <p><i>“If you look at the policy narrative, [LIOs are] almost being asked to face in two directions to achieve the same thing. Which is hard, and yeah there's always been an element of needing to compete and needing to collaborate and to decide what's appropriate when. But we need to be better... to be higher quality... run more efficiently... and more in tune with the needs of the organisations we support. And some initiatives,</i></p> | <p><i>“Consolidated local infrastructure is going to be able to operate more effectively in [a] demand-led [market]. Because if five local infrastructure organisations all try and fight each other and compete against the consultants too or whatever, then you know there's not going to be enough for anyone. If there's one partnership that's much better off for the customer and it's more likely to be successful... people talk collaboration and then act</i></p>   |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | <p>some of that's going to come from collaboration. So collaboration, getting organisations who provide services working together, and reorganising is going to drive quality, and innovation, and efficiency. But they're also saying quality and innovation and efficiency are going to come from making people compete, putting power in the hands of the front line organisations, to buy their own services. So where do you go from there? Can you do both?"</p>  | <p>competitive... I think that as a strategy for operating in a demand-led environment, it still makes sense to operate collaboratively. But to be honest about collaborating only with people who have something to bring, rather than thinking you need to bring everyone in. Rather than thinking this is an area that actually cannot sustain ten... five... however many infrastructure organisations and we need to have a difficult decision about... about there being fewer."</p>  |
| <p><b>Crowding out of different sources of funding</b></p> | <p>"There's definitely a crowding out effect. I remember reading some articles about it a couple of years ago that certain types of money crowd out other types. And I think that some of the willingness to pay, well we certainly find in terms of the services we provide to our members, that it's harder to charge for them because they know we get grants. So, grants have actually crowded out charging. But under this new way of working you could go the other way out, where funders know that you're running your services commercially might make them less inclined to give you money. Yeah, I think there's inevitably a crowding out effect of certain types of income, and I've no reason to think that that wouldn't happen in some instances here."</p> | <p>"What I think the optimal solution would be is a sort of mixed economy, which I think they [LIOs] should be able to access money from the local authority, grants, people paying them directly in order to do particular things – a piece of research say - but also generating increasing amounts of income by charging for services, I think that's the most sustainable model for infrastructure. And I suppose the risk is that... and what we've been trying to counsel funders not to do is that... if everyone starts moving towards a demand-led model for everything then you know, one risk is that the service can't be provided because the costs of providing it are greater than the amount that organisation can pay, and that's in the past not been such of a problem because it's been free or heavily subsidised, but if funders see local infrastructure charging then they'll maybe be less inclined to help provide those services that there's no</p> |

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <p><b>Relationship tensions around charging for support services</b></p> | <p><i>"Yeah, it's fair to say that people have clashed over this [charging]. Less so now because we've restructured, lots of infrastructure providers have had to, and the people that remain in an organisation, well they're the resilient ones. I'm not necessarily saying they all agree, or that we got rid of the people who didn't agree, but you sort of move on. So at the time there was a lot more scepticism and opposition, and again it was that thing that we didn't think some people could pay, but also that it taints the process by having that financial consideration, it impacts on your relationships. That was the argument. I suppose when you're doing work that you don't normally charge for – so for example people are getting in touch and asking us to speak at their conferences, and that's hanging because now we're having to say we can only come and speak at your conference if you're going to pay us to do it, well it's the elephant in the room isn't it. Nobody likes it, it does make things tense and I do think those tensions will be felt more at a local level."</i></p> | <p><i>market for".</i></p> <p><i>"Certainly there's been internal debates within my organisation about it [charging for support services], but also I've seen it within the infrastructure organisations themselves. Some people are real enthusiasts and others, some have very strong relations with local infrastructure organisations and are nervous about the effect it will have on them. Um, and we've sort of had to work hard to get that... Well. I went round six different regions to talk about this and it tended to be either people were all quite supportive or all of them were really rather hostile."</i></p> |
| <p><b>Change within LIOs</b></p>   | <p><i>"Well, I think the issues are probably the pace of change and the scale of change. So if I'm losing a large amount of public sector money that enabled me to offer certain types of services, and I</i></p>   | <p><i>"I think it's fair to say a lot of infrastructure responses were quite nervous about the implications demand-led".</i></p>   |

want to carry on doing the same thing, clearly if I... If I used to have a heavily subsidised training programme and now I need to make it pay for itself, the ability to deliver the volumes that are going to create the amount of resource I need to fund the same activity are immense. If I used to pay a trainer thirty thousand, and if I put a programme on that makes a bit of money, the idea that I can cover the whole cost of that just from doing a bit of training, well you've got to do a lot more. So I think it's the, just the pace of change and the scale of change. It's rapid. The organisations that they [LIOs] support are undergoing many changes, so you know, they're supporting local charities that are facing a whole load of questions that the support providers aren't immune from themselves. There are some cultural issues, around charging, in particular, and I think it impacts on your ability to run a service effectively, and I think it impacts on your relationships too, and the way you're perceived as an organisation. The ability for infrastructure to cope with change will be a real determinant I think of how successful they are at handling the new model [of charging]."

"At the top end there were some very very good organisations that [have] seen some of this coming and probably in fact diversified a bit which is the key to their success. They've seen an opportunity for diversifying their revenue streams, they're the ones who set up consortia for the local authority contracts and get bits of income that way, and they get their own bits of direct delivery so they haven't got all their eggs in one basket. Then all the way at the other end there are some quite small organisations, typically who are in a small district council... which see all this as very threatening and don't really know what to do as a result. I think they're the ones that won't be able to cope with the cultural implications, with that shift in their organisational culture."

## Appendix B

### Research approach letter to CEOs and Chairs of Boards

Dear [insert CEO/chair name]

#### Request for assistance with research into local infrastructure organisations selling support services

I am a PhD researcher at Sheffield Hallam University, and I am writing to ask if [insert organisation's name] would be interested in taking part in a new piece of research.

**About the study:** The research is concerned with the issues of when it is right for infrastructure organisations to move towards providing chargeable services to voluntary organisations they support, and the practicalities of doing so. We know this is a sensitive issue - not something that can be dealt with in a short interview or questionnaire - so if [insert organisation's name] is willing to take part, the proposal is that I would spend a six week period, working around four days a week alongside the existing staff team, to develop plans for a project. For example, you might want me to investigate the costings, marketing and likely take up for a specific service which you feel might be worth developing as a chargeable activity.

**Basis of my involvement:** There would be no charge for my time - I would be a volunteer with you - I would just need a desk or somewhere to work. As part of the research on the broader issues of charging for services, I would hope you would let me sit in on relevant meetings, and talk to staff, trustees, volunteers and any other stakeholders who may be relevant - and generally learning more of how you work and your overall focus.

I would suggest my time with you is focused on planning and discussions with relevant staff, a survey to your member organisations, and interviews with a small number of them to consider their rationale for purchasing services - but

within reason, I am happy for my time to be used in any way that would be helpful, so long as there is some link to the broad theme of this study. At the end, I would produce a written proposal/business plan for you regarding the viability service(s) you want me to explore, but you would, of course, be free to use or abandon whatever emerges.

**Rationale:** You will be aware that selling services is a response which many local infrastructure organisations are now considering following significant funding cuts over recent years. In addition, the consideration of demand-led funding by large funders such as the Big Lottery Fund will mean that infrastructure organisations who have not previously considered selling their support services may be forced into doing so. The research intends to help infrastructure organisations understand the positives and the pitfalls of selling support services, as well as making a theoretical contribution to the underlying issues.

**Study involvement and supervision:** The overall project is a three year full-time PhD study, supervised by *Professor Gareth G Morgan* and *Dr Tracey Coule*, both of whom are key scholars within the field. Before starting this research, my own work history was deeply embedded with local infrastructure organisations, funding advice, and trading and I am a trustee of the infrastructure organisation in my own area - so I would be bringing a wide range of relevant experience.

**Ethics and Confidentiality:** Naturally I realise you will need to reflect on whether [name of org] is comfortable about taking part in this study. I am aware that some of the issues may be quite sensitive (especially if you are considering charging for support which is currently free) and I want to be able to explore these issues frankly with you. However, if you say yes, I will make sure that staff and volunteers understand by my research role whilst I am volunteering with you. The names of everyone involved in the research will be changed in order to provide anonymity; the name of your organisation and its location will also be changed. I cannot guarantee complete confidentiality as the research

is likely to be published, but I can assure you that any data that allows either the organisation or the people involved to be identified with be made anonymous.

**Next steps:** Many thanks for taking the time to consider this proposal. If you are interested in taking part or would like to discuss the proposal in more detail please can you e-mail me at [Dawn.Elliott@shu.ac.uk](mailto:Dawn.Elliott@shu.ac.uk) , or call me on either \*\*\*\*\*. If you want to contact my PhD Director of Studies, he can be reached at [Gareth.Morgan@shu.ac.uk](mailto:Gareth.Morgan@shu.ac.uk). We trust you will agree that this is a really importance research project for infrastructure organisations, and that [insert organisation's name] will consider being involved.

Yours sincerely

**Dawn Elliott**

Researcher

Sheffield Hallam University

## Appendix C

### Research Participation Information Sheet

#### **Research Participation Information Sheet**

To all staff and volunteers

#### **Research regarding local infrastructure organisations and chargeable support services**

I am a PhD researcher at Sheffield Hallam University and I am currently researching how local infrastructure organisations take strategic decisions about charging for support services. Rosemary CVS has agreed to be part of this research, and the following information will outline the study and what it means for you.

**About the study:** The research is concerned with the issues surrounding infrastructure organisations moving towards providing chargeable services to the voluntary organisations they support, and the practicalities of doing so. I know this is a sensitive issue - not something that can be dealt with in a short interview or questionnaire – so my research will involve spending six weeks working in your offices as a volunteer, working on a business planning project that looks at your organisations' potential to charge for services. During this time, I plan to be working alongside staff and volunteers, but I will also be making observations about the organisation's culture, values and attitudes that will form a part of my research. My conversations with staff and volunteers will also form a part of the research. Occasionally, I might also ask to attend a meeting with you to observe that.

**Rationale:** You will be aware that selling services is a response which many local infrastructure organisations are now considering following significant funding cuts over recent years. In addition, the consideration of demand-led funding by large funders such as the Big Lottery Fund will mean that

infrastructure organisations who have not previously considered selling their support services may be forced into doing so. The research intends to help infrastructure organisations understand the debates surrounding selling support services, as well as making a theoretical contribution to the underlying issues. Once I have completed four case studies of this kind, I will produce a broader report on the issues (but without naming those who took part) - this will be available to any infrastructure organisation via NAVCA.

**Confidentiality and consent:** Whilst this research might feel sensitive to you, I want you to feel you can talk to me in full, and frankly. In order to do this, you need to know that your data and the things you say will be protected. The name of this organisation, its location and any other identifying features will be made anonymous; as will your own name and any details that will make you identifiable by a third party. Nowhere in the research records will your name ever be entered; a false name will be used to record anything you say. Whilst I cannot guarantee full confidentiality as the research is likely to be published, I will ensure anything said by you as part of the research has all traces of your identity removed from it in order to protect your anonymity, whilst allowing you to speak honestly and openly as part of the research. The research records will also be kept in encrypted files, and in compliance with all data protection requirements. You do, of course, have the right to withhold any information you choose, to opt out of the research, or to withdraw from being a part of the study at any time.

**Next steps:** If you would like to discuss the research in more detail, or would like to opt out of the research, please feel free to contact me by emailing [Dawn.Elliott@shu.ac.uk](mailto:Dawn.Elliott@shu.ac.uk) or calling me on either 01159 256694 or 07791 881454 by January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013. If you would prefer to contact my PhD Director of Studies for any further information, he can be reached at [Gareth.Morgan@shu.ac.uk](mailto:Gareth.Morgan@shu.ac.uk). I look forward to meeting you over the next few weeks and hope that you will enjoy the opportunity to have your views about charging for support services considered as part of the research.

Kind regards,

Dawn Elliott  
Researcher  
Sheffield Hallam University

## Appendix D

### Copy of email circulated to all staff and volunteers upon arrival

Dear all,

Apologies for the mass email, but I am writing to introduce myself. I have just started with [insert organisation name] this week and I am looking forward to getting my teeth stuck into things, but I wanted to ensure you had the opportunity to learn a bit about why I am here and what it is that I'll be doing.

I am a doctoral research student at Sheffield Hallam University where I am undertaking a piece of research looking at local infrastructure organisations charging for services. While I am here, I have two purposes: the first is that I am undertaking a project looking at whether [insert organisation name] could and should charge for services. I am helping [insert CEO name] and the board with this by looking at some of the things that we do that there might be a market for, and trying to plan how much of those things we could sell and who would - and wouldn't - buy them. I have worked in infrastructure organisations for four of the last five years - mostly in funding advice - and I am the Vice Chair of the local infrastructure organisation where I live, so I know what a difficult time it is to work in this part of the sector at the moment.

The other role I am taking on while I am here is a broader piece of research about charging for my own purposes with Sheffield Hallam University. All being well, you should have received a participation information sheet about this research prior to my starting, telling you more about what the research is and what I will be doing, plus letting you know that you can opt out at any time just by telling me that you don't want to be a part of the study. In case you haven't seen this information sheet, **I have attached it again to this email.**

In practice, the research will involve me observing the people here including staff and volunteers, and our attitudes towards charging - it will also involve some other things such as me gathering key documents relating to charging, and taking notes on any meetings that we have that relate to it. It is quite likely

that I will want to do a one to one interview with you at some point to ask you what you know and think about chargeable services too - this will be used both for my research and to help [insert organisation name] with the project I am working on too. Again, if you don't want to be part of this, just let me know. Finally, I will be carrying a recording device with me just to help me keep on top of all the notes that I am making, and to allow me to check back in the future. This is not recording all the time - I will explicitly ask your permission if I would like to record a conversation, and you are very welcome to say no or tell me to keep things off the record if you wish.

I'm happy to answer any questions you have about the study I am doing and the project I am doing. Feel free to just reply to this email or grab me at any time.

Looking forward to getting to know you over the coming weeks!

All the best,

Dawn Elliott  
Researcher