

Learning from Growth Funding through the Community Renewal Fund

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Agenda

- What was the brief for the research project?
- How did the team at Si deliver it?
- Growth funding through the last decade (or so!)
- Overall learning from the 13 places
- Case Studies



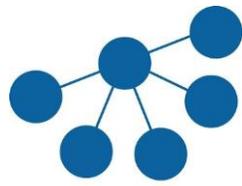
The brief

- To share learning on the CRF and wider growth funding. This will include demonstrating good practice from the Community Renewal Fund.
- To support the sector understand some of the learning from the programme, feeding core messages to government for the design of future growth funding.
- To develop some overall learning for the future of local growth funding.

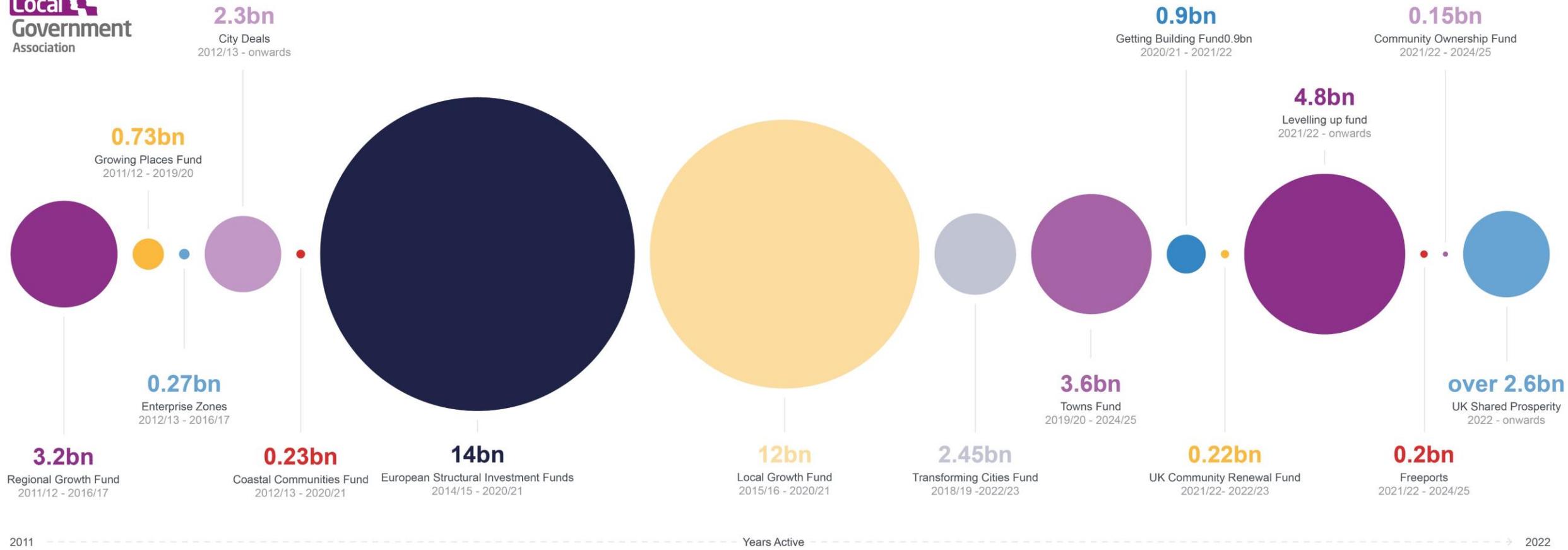


Method

- A case study approach to extracting and learning from experiences of Community Renewal Fund. Interviews with 13 case study areas.
 - Blackpool Council
 - Devon County Council
 - Greater London Authority / Launch It: Youth Enterprise Hub
 - Greater Manchester Combined Authority
 - Leicester City Council
 - Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
 - Norfolk County Council
 - North Somerset Council
 - Portsmouth City Council
 - Suffolk County Council
 - Warwickshire County Council
 - West Yorkshire Combined Authority
 - Wyre Forest District Council
- Through this, we set out key research questions including:
 - How well does the portfolio of successful projects meet local investment priorities?
 - Do the successful project(s) tackle the inequalities of disadvantaged groups?
 - Has the process strengthened working with partners?
 - What changes would better support the delivery of local growth and investment requirements?
 - Does the scale of project have an impact on the management of the fund and if so, in what way?
 - Are the compliance requirements well balanced in comparison to the delivery of outcomes?
 - Has there been effective support and guidance from government through the process?



Shared Intelligence



2011 ----- Years Active -----> 2022

Overall learning to support future local growth programmes

1. It is clear that local government knows its local priorities and ambitions as is demonstrated through development and delivery of strategic plans, local policies, and place visions. This should give confidence that competitive funding processes, which cause a pressure on financial and human resource, are not necessary.

Overall learning... where local government does not have visions or strategies in place, support those places by exception.

2. In an effort to achieve consistency, a centralised process can inadvertently take away local government's ability to deliver against local priorities. Through CRF, we saw councils submitting a balanced portfolio of outcomes based on local need. In many cases, after central government's own assessment process, many places found funded portfolios focused on one priority only (i.e., young people).

Overall learning... trust localities to get it right with as little bureaucracy through the process from the centre as possible.



Overall learning to support future local growth programmes

3. Flexibility in budgets should be built into future programmes. The costs incurred in managing the application process were not built in which in many cases caused capacity or budgetary issues.

Overall learning... allow greater flexibility so local government can focus more on delivering core outcomes, not processes.

4. Geographical borders based on administrative boundaries should be dealt with in a pragmatic way to better serve local need.

Overall learning... recognise the need for flexible geographies reflecting the local economy and relationships.

5. Relationships – don't happen overnight. Decisions made out of the control of councils make relationships harder to manage.

Overall learning... understanding future opportunities for growth funding can encourage an on going dialogue.

