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Communities and
Neighbourhoods
APSE seminar

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Challenges and political choices

‘Neighbourhoods can’t do everything; we need to concentrate on what they are best placed to do – and on how to manage the inevitable trade-offs they throw up. We need to develop a conception of [...] “a good political life” at the neighbourhood level and then explore in detail the implications for citizens, representatives, leaders and public servants.’

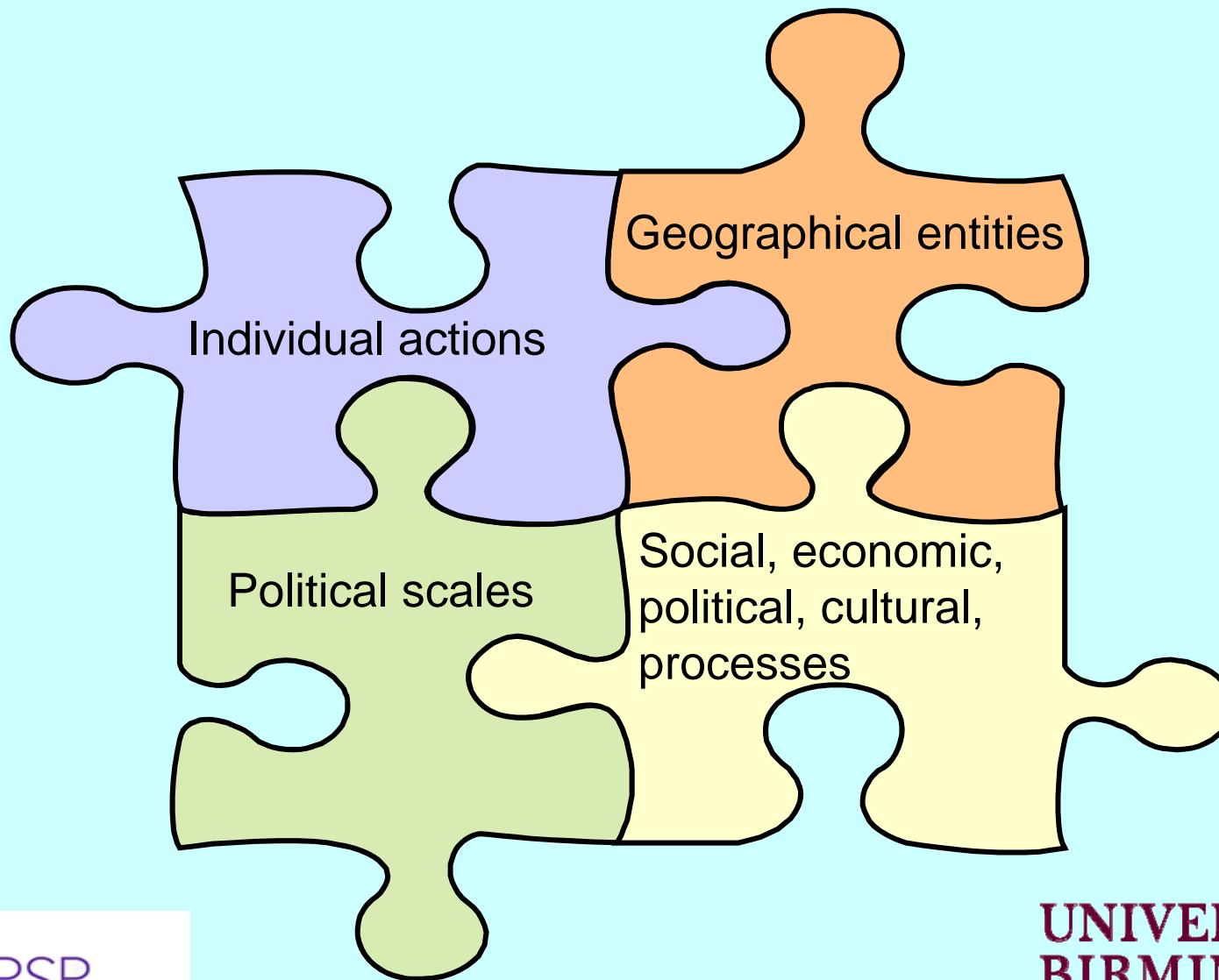
Lowndes and Sullivan (2007: 20)

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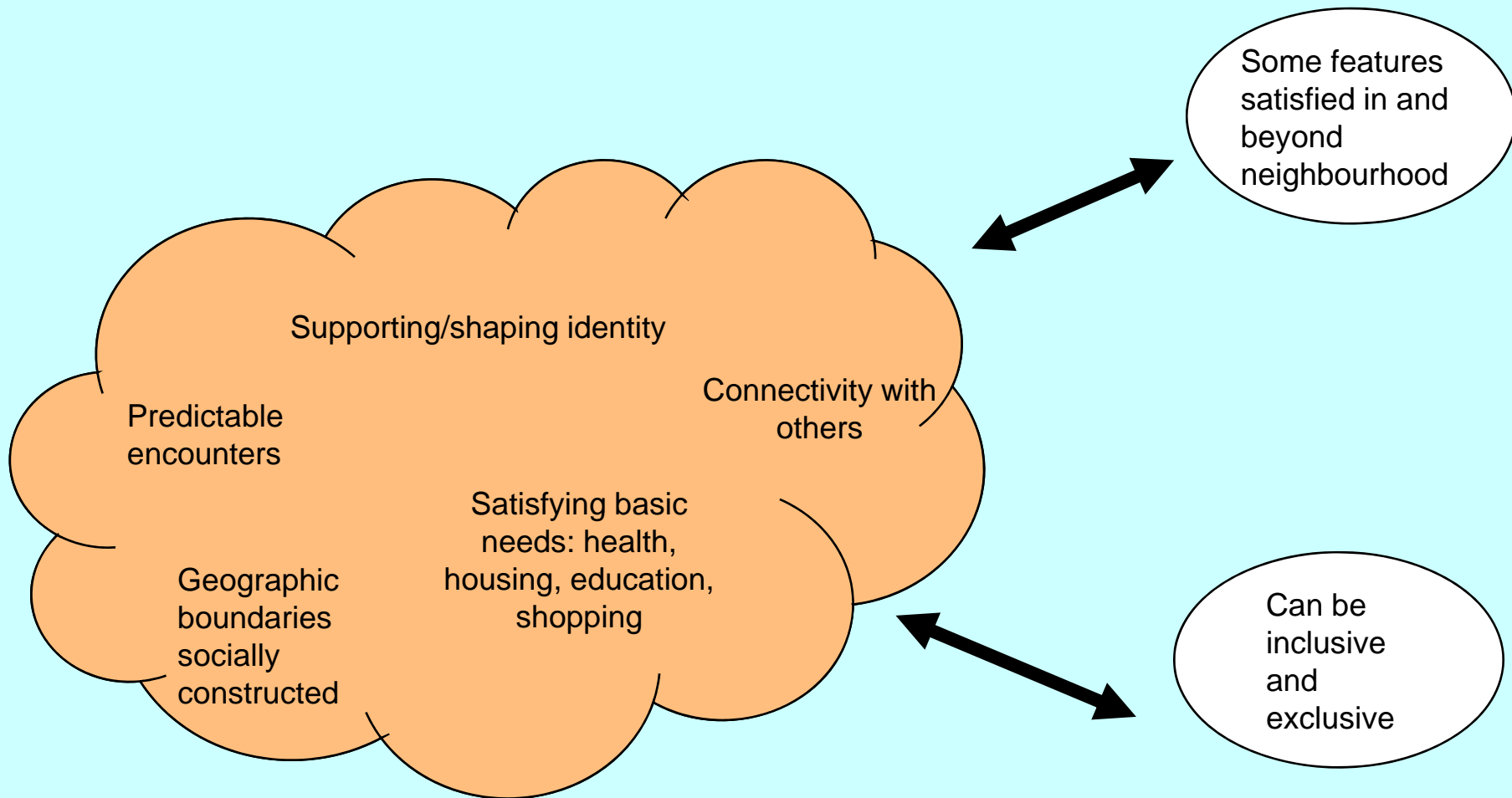
Purpose

- What is meant by 'neighbourhood'
- Meeting strategic objectives through neighbourhood delivery
- Organising operational resources

Defining Neighbourhood



Why Neighbourhood – features



Why Neighbourhood – government and democracy

□ 'Big' government

- efficiency
- economies of scale
- equity
- representative democracy
- pluralistic
- professional bureaucracy

□ 'Small' government

- participation
- responsiveness
- economies of scope
- Participative democracy
- homogenous
- affective

Meeting strategic objectives through the neighbourhood – opportunities

- ❑ Multi-level, multi- actor environment: new spaces for decisions, non-hierarchical relationships
- ❑ Beyond ‘party’ politics to new forms of participation: multiple and instant connectivity
- ❑ Collaboration and networks: informal linkages, ‘catalytic leaders’, new mechanisms for delivery
- ❑ Citizens as ‘co-governors’ in state/citizen led networks
- ❑ ‘New governance’ offers alternative to established democracy/capacity ‘trade off’

Purposes and forms of neighbourhood governance

- Neighbourhood *empowerment*: direct participation, social capital and cohesion
- Neighbourhood *partnership*: stakeholder interaction for improved outcomes
- Neighbourhood *government*: democratic renewal through representative processes
- Neighbourhood *management*: focus on the 'front line', co-production, performance accountability
- The *civic rationale* identifies increased opportunities for direct citizen participation.
- The *social rationale* points to the benefits of partnership for improving citizen well-being
- The *political rationale* stresses increased accountability responsiveness & accessibility
- The *economic rationale* focuses on efficiency and effectiveness gains associated with economies of scope

Source: Lowndes and Sullivan (2008)

	Neighbourhood empowerment	Neighbourhood partnership	Neighbourhood government	Neighbourhood management
Primary rationale	Civic	Social	Political	Economic
Key objectives	Active citizens and cohesive communities	Citizen well-being and regeneration	Responsive and accountable decision-making	More effective local service delivery
Democratic device	Participatory democracy	Stakeholder democracy	Representative democracy	Market democracy
Citizen role	Citizen: voice	Partner: loyalty	Elector: vote	Consumer: choice
Leadership role	Animateur, enabler	Broker, chair	Councillor, mini-mayor	Entrepreneur, director
Institutional forms	Forums, Co-production	Service board, mini-LSP	Town councils, area committees	Contracts, charters

Organising operations - skills

- What sort of skills are needed?
 - Empowerment: community development, social enterprise
 - Partnership: partnership co-ordinator, planners, technical support
 - Government: councillor support and liaison
 - Management: service co-ordinator, core service delivery teams

Organising operations - functions

- Which functions will be undertaken?
 - Planning
 - Service design
 - Service delivery
 - Commissioning
 - Scrutiny

Organising operations - funding

- What kind of funding is required?
 - Pump priming funding
 - Access to external funds (public/private)
 - ‘Top-slicing’ mainstream budgets
 - Community grants
 - Devolution of mainstream funds
 - which?
 - to whom?
 - at what level?

Organising operations – structures

- What structures are appropriate and viable?
 - Universal across authority or focused on specific neighbourhoods
 - Core neighbourhood teams linked to centralised ‘back office’
 - Multiple layers – neighbourhood, district, central core
 - Local authority alone or plus others

Meeting the challenges of neighbourhood governance

- ❑ Less capacity?
- ❑ Less diversity?
- ❑ Less competence?
- ❑ Less equity?

Concluding thoughts

- Balance resonance with pragmatism in defining neighbourhoods
- 'New governance' has generated important opportunities for neighbourhood working
- Purpose should guide institutional design
- 'Trade offs' are inevitable