

MANAGING LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE BIG SOCIETY

18 MARCH 2011

LEYLAND CIVIC CENTRE

CIPFA

The Chartered Institute of
Public Finance & Accountancy

LANCASTER
UNIVERSITY



Summary

- A Busted Flush?
- The defense
- The political response
- The fiscal response
- What's the thinking behind Big Society?

A “busted flush...”

- The Big Society is an idea raised by the Conservative party during the last election campaign
- An odd ideological combination: not in accord with the Thatcher version on conservatism
- Described as a “Busted flush” following Liverpool’s decision to pull out of the system

The PM's response

- The Prime Minister rushed to the defense of his idea
- [David Cameron Interview](#)



A Political response

- How has local government reacted?

Liverpool has pulled out

Manchester major cuts in services

- How have NGO/ voluntary sector responded?

Vocal public criticism of cuts. “you can’t cut the key instruments of the Big Society programme.”

- Are council’s cutting more than they need to to embarrass the government?

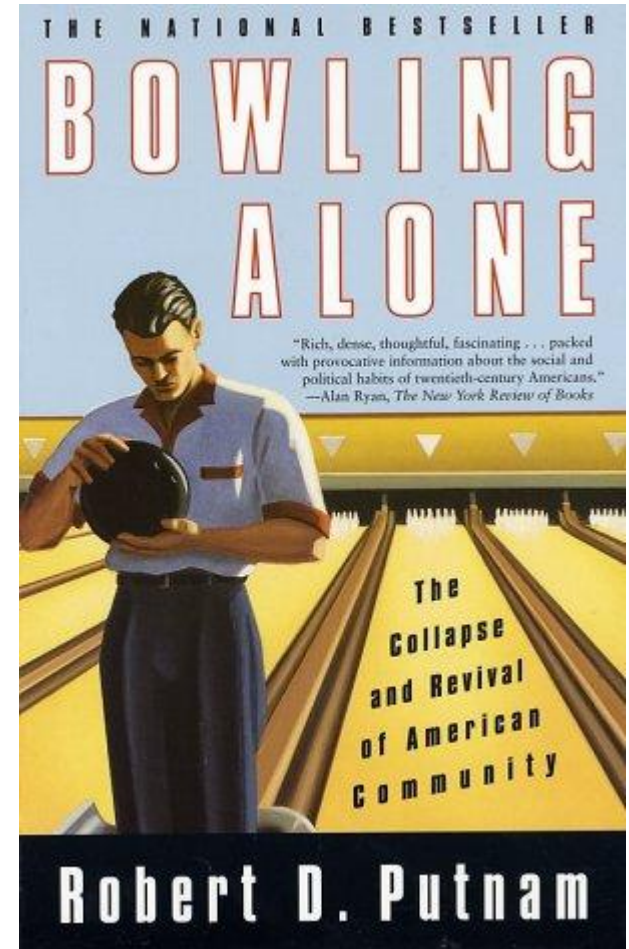
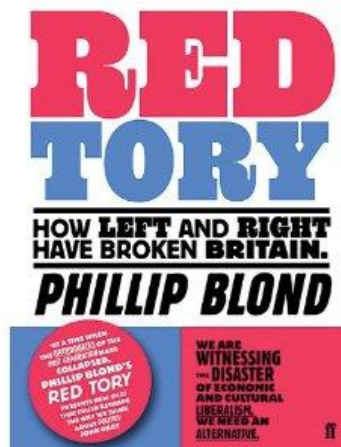
If this is the case, is it a good strategy?

The fiscal response

- Is it a false argument to say you can either have cuts or “Big Society”?
- Funding cuts used to shape the delivery of services towards the underling values of “Big Society”.

Underlying values and assumptions

- Conservative
 - ▣ Philip Blond *Res Publica*
- Collective
 - ▣ 'Red Tory'
- Building Social Capital



A strategic contribution to maintain funding for services

- Structure claims for funds in terms of (social) entrepreneurship and investment
 - ▣ “Doing more with less”
 - ▣ Partnership with private sector, voluntary sector
 - ▣ Partnership with universities?
- Collaboration with community ; with other agencies
- How is the authority utilizing or building “social capital?”

Questions and Comments



LANCASTER
UNIVERSITY

□ Contact: p.bishop@lancs.ac.uk

