



Resolving tensions in joint working

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Total Place is now well established and all 13 pilots have a clear focus on what they want to achieve in the programme, and who they need to work with to get there.

The original aim of Total Place was to bring about fundamental changes to the way local authorities and partners work with Whitehall, through an honest, two-way dialogue.

We have now seen positive discussions between the pilots and government representatives about barriers to improved outcomes and efficiency savings, indicating that Whitehall is committed to looking at how changes can be made.

We have also seen, as we expected to, that this closer and more flexible working between the two tiers inevitably at times exposes tensions between policy and delivery.

But we also know that hiding behind these tensions simply maintains the status quo and is no longer a viable option.

The unique chance Total Place gives us is to tackle these tensions and to try to resolve them rather than reverting to the “blame game”.

None of the parties involved can afford to pass up that chance. john atkinson

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