Learning Interdependence and Mutual Trust in Environmental Policy Integration

three cases of urban transport governance

Hansen, Carsten Jahn

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Learning Interdependence and Mutual Trust in Environmental Policy Integration
Three cases of urban transport governance

Carsten Jahn Hansen
Assistant Professor, Ph.D. M.Sc.
Department of Development and Planning, Aalborg University, Denmark
Fibigerstraede 13, DK-9220 Aalborg
Ph: +45 9635 8286, fax: +45 9815 1085
jahn@plan.aau.dk

Abstract: This paper highlights and discusses governance aspects and collaborative practices in relation to three cases of environmental integration in urban transport policy and planning. In each their way, the cases of Lund (Sweden), Groningen (the Netherlands) and Aalborg (Denmark) illustrate that environmental policy integration is very much an issue of managing policy processes and of conflict-handling; and hence of *how to do* rather than *what to do*. In particular, the cases offer illustrative examples of the importance of interdependence and trust between policymakers and influential actors in processes dealing with environmental policy integration. The cases support prescriptive conclusions that interdependence and trust should be viewed and dealt with as transformative processes. Trust and interdependence, and in particular the actors perception of interdependence, can itself be transformed, developed or established through interactive and more open policy and planning processes. Interdependence and trust can be learned, changed or adjusted through deliberative policy and planning processes. Hence, the cases indicate *how* environmental policy integration may be eased through an increased attention to the policy process itself; in particular through the facilitation and mediation of more interactive, collaborative and deliberative modes of conflict resolution and of collective learning.

INTRODUCTION

> …if you make plans behind your desk, if you have a lot of experience in a certain area and you listen very well to everyone that has an interest in that area, and you listen very well to the politician that is in charge of that area – then with all your expertise, behind your desk, you may have a nice plan with a good balance of all interests. Then you have a plan that is technically the best plan there is. But, there is one thing missing, and that is support for the plan. All the things that you had in your mind when you made the plan, behind your desk, is not in the mind of the people that look at the plan when you present it. That can cause trouble. (Former leading civil servant in Groningen)

Today, actors in urban and environmental policymaking and planning activities must face the hardship of dealing with change and development under conditions, which have often been described by analysts as increasingly complex, fragmented, and differentiated (see Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Dryzek, 2000; Forester, 1999; Castells, 1996; Bogason et al, 2004). It is often argued that traditional hierarchical public institutions are increasingly unable to cope with contemporary problems of rapid social, technological, and economic change through schematic top-down regulatory approaches. In response to the apparent limited reach of the ´set solutions´ of formal government institutions, a new range of informal and often ad hoc policymaking practices is said to have emerged (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003). Traditional mono-centric governing and regulation mechanisms give way to new and more interactive and collaborative ways of solving collective problems, for instance between the public and private sphere, resulting in the growth of more poly-centric ways of organising and pooling resources. This development has been characterised in terms of a move in focus from government to governance, and one of its main driving forces seem to be the realisation of interdependence and a need of coordination and collaboration across interests and actors.

So, if the `rules´ of policymaking and planning practices are changing, how can one talk of a capacity to act and to achieve specific goals under such circumstances? This paper aims to contribute to a discussion of deliberative governance approaches in relation to specific attempts at renewal of public policymaking. In doing so, a main focus on the role of interdependence and trust in collaborative practices will emerge, as they are identified to be some of the key elements in understanding and discussing the emergence of new and more interactive policymaking and planning practices. The discussion will be based in three cases of environmental integration in urban transport policymaking and planning – namely in the urban areas of Aalborg (DK), Lund (S) and Groningen (NL). Finally, the paper will draw some preliminary lessons learned from the cases in relation to the role of interdependence and trust among interests and actors in policymaking and planning practices.

GOVERNANCE, INTERDEPENDENCE AND TRUST

Proponents of governance approaches hold that many collective problems, such as those concerning urban development and environmental issues, are simply too complicated, too contested and too unstable to allow for schematic centralized regulation (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003; Kooiman, 1993; Sehested, 2002). It seems increasingly difficult for planning authorities in a top-down oriented government context to single-handedly produce and implement new policies and plans, for instance for development and environmental improvement in urban areas. The accelerated spread of information and knowledge in society means that interests and actors outside traditional government settings are increasingly becoming skilled at arguing and putting pressure behind their case at still earlier phases in policymaking and planning processes. In addition, public planning authorities often also have to face a significant pressure to, or even reduction in, their resources. Those are only a couple of many circumstances that have combined into an increasing need for coordination and pooling of resources between a range of public as well as private actors and interests, if collective problems are to be solved. Concrete and pragmatic local problem-solving, joint responsibility, continuous performance-based and collective learning become potential building stones of alternative strategies and practices (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003).

In many ways, the governance perspective is about improving decision-making systems and increasing the capacity to get things done, not just as a result of the power and authority of formal institutions, but rather as a consequence of collaboration between varieties of actors (Stoker, 1998; Sehested, 2002). Governance can be characterised as a differentiated, polycentric political system based on autonomous subsystems and networks, in which public and private actors participate in decision-making processes on the background of interdependence and without clear hierarchical relations and limitations between actors and centres (Sehested, 2002, p. 47). Governance implies the active involvement in collective problem-solving of actors and resources outside the sphere of traditional government. It implies the advent of new types of institutions that are collaborative, involving different stakeholders, self-organising, and uniquely tailored to context, opportunities and problems (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003). Such deliberative governance processes can also be characterised as a social inquiry in which participants seek to gain understanding of themselves and others, in order to learn and to persuade (Dryzek, 2000). Hence, it implies a focus on increased participation, collaboration and partnerships between interdependent sectors (horizontally), levels (vertically), and actors (interests), in order to achieve positive synergy-effects across and beyond the traditional borders of governments (Sehested, 2002).

Interdependence
As indicated, interdependence is argued to play a key role in `driving´ these collaborative processes. For interdependence to appear, actors in policymaking and planning practices must recognise a limited ability to solve problems and act on their own. Mere interest-based bargaining must be substituted by an increased awareness of the necessity of pooling resources (e.g. economic and knowledge) between actors in new collaborative and more interactive policymaking practices. Several forms of interdependence may be discerned, see Bogason (2000, pp.26-27): A social dimension of interdependence is implied through the perceived need between actors for coordination despite differentiation in language, systems of meaning, and identities. Differentiation and fragmentation processes may lead to problems regarding collective solutions, but some actors may then, as a result, try to overcome those problems through collective action. Materially, there is interdependence from externalities and dependence related to common resources, e.g. in relation to ecological concerns. Closely related is spatial interdependence that can be understood in terms of geographical and/or ecological spread of externalities. Finally, Bogason also identifies time as a factor to interdependence, for instance when an organisational setup becomes fragmented and involved actors increasingly favour their own autonomy and follow their own rhythm only. Then strong discrepancies may occur, and actors realising their need for collective action will set in.

Innes and Booher (2003) emphasises the importance of both diversity and interdependence in collaborative policy dialogues. Diversity is claimed to be central in order to take full advantage of the creativity that can come from trying to find actions that can respond to a wide set of competing interests (p. 40). Interdependence is found essential in order to achieve the kinds of results that will allow stakeholders collectively to create an adaptive learning system that can be robust and effective (p. 40). Innes and Booher point to a shared perception of interdependence around a specific problem as a driving force for voluntary collaborative processes. Such a perception has occurred, they exemplify, in cases where stakeholders depended strongly on the same limited resources (e.g. water or funding for transport) – which may be seen as material interdependence – or where linkages between stakeholders were simply too complicated and uncoordinated – hence similar to Bogason´s social interdependence. In addition, Innes and Booher claim that interdependence can be discovered and learned in collaborative practices. Stakeholders begin to learn about their interdependence as they explain their own situations and needs, but they learn most about this as the group goes through the difficult task of agreeing on how to define and measure the problem and deciding in their shared mission (p. 41).

This paper intends to discuss, based on the cases, specific characteristics and circumstances related to interdependence, or the perception of interdependence. For instance, what is the role of problem pressure, e.g. in terms of material phenomena or (many) years of government failure or serious lack of coordination? Likewise, does a shared experience of interdependence also occur in cases of more proactive approaches, such as in examples of urban and transport policymaking and planning where the actual problems to be regulated and planned for are not yet so prevalent? And finally, (how) can interdependence be learned, and can it be facilitated (for instance by planners)?

Trust
Another central aspect in collaborative processes is the issue of trust, which is often closely related to interdependence. Trust between key (interdependent) players in policymaking and planning is often necessary in order to attain sufficient commitment, will, resources and accountability in finding and implementing solutions. According to Warren (1999), when one trusts, one accepts some amount of risk for potential harm in exchange for the benefits of cooperation (p. 1). However,

in political situations, and in processes of policymaking and planning, the assumption of solidarity with others is often suspect. Politics does not provide a natural environment for trust (p. 19), but trust can produce desirable means of social coordination when other means – such as state regulation and unintentional coordinations of markets – are limited in their capacities to accomplish necessary and desirable outcomes (Warren, 1999; Offe, 1999). One can distinguish between particularised and generalised trust. The kind of trust that contributes to social capital is trust that can be generalised to people who are strangers, as compared to trust that is particular, limited to one's family or group (Warren, 1999; Uslaner, 1999). Generalised trust helps to build large-scale, complex, interdependent social networks and institutions and for this reason is a key disposition for developing social capital (Warren, 1999).

Hajer and Wagenaar (2003) argue that trust cannot be assumed. Trust must be produced and reproduced in active interplay between actors. They argue that policymaking is not just about finding solutions, it is also about finding formats that generate trust among interdependent actors. In fact they claim that policymaking gets a new meaning as a constitutive force in creating trust among interdependent people (p.12), and that policymaking processes therefore often may lead to political will formation, rather than policymaking being the consequence of political will formation (p.13). It implies that practical political cultures and policymaking styles become central elements and objects of attention and possible change. Innes and Booher (2003, p. 37) support this by showing that in order to achieve collaboration and authentic dialogue (rather than rhetoric dialogue) a group of actors must define its own ground rules for interaction and its own mission.

This paper will discuss whether and how relations of trust can contribute to limit the inefficiencies of rule-based means of coordination (as argued by Warren, 1999) and traditional mono-centric modes of governing, as well as to improve the workings of more interactive and collaborative approaches.

THE CASES – AALBORG, LUND AND GRONINGEN

The discussion in this paper will be built on evidence drawn from the author's detailed study of specific efforts to transform, from an environmental perspective, urban transport policymaking and planning in Aalborg, Lund and Groningen through more than three decades. However, key attention will be given to developments in the 1990s and onwards, as this period provides useful data for discussing the issues put forward in this paper. The cases have been studied and analysed through preliminary questionnaires, documents (plans, reports, work papers, minutes, letters, debate and information material, and newspaper articles), 26 interviews, personal observations, dialogue as well as telephone and email communication, and finally feedback and reviewing of case histories from interview persons. The three cities have been known, since the 1970s, as forerunner communities in promoting environmentally friendly modes of transport. See [table 1] for an account of significant transport policy and planning initiatives in the three cities. Further insight into the study can be found in Hansen (2002).

The Aalborg case concerns the development of an Action Plan for Traffic and Environment in Aalborg. A project organisation was established that consisted of a political Steering Group with leading politicians and a cross-sectored Project Group that mainly included leading civil servants and two consultants, see [figure 1]. The policymaking and planning process was rather closed with few examples of direct involvement of parties outside the formal political-administrative framework (only public transport companies). The attitudes of stakeholders and the public were tested through

a public pre-enquiry procedure, and public meetings (hearings) were arranged. Finally, a required public debate phase was carried out.

Lund developed an ambitious and long-term vision and plan for environmentally adapted transport; called the LundaMaTs plan. The process leading to the final plan lasted more than 3 years, although the main activities went on for about 1½ year. It brought together a wide range of political parties, leading civil servants and interest parties in a new and specially tailored process, see [figure 1]. A political steering group, the Transport Commission, was established. It contained leading local politicians from the most influential political parties (across the traditional left-right spectrum) and was held directly responsible to the Municipal Council. In addition, a cross-sectored work group with leading civil servants and an independent consultant was organised. Furthermore, a Reference Group was established with business interests, grass-root organisations, the police, industry, schools, other public authorities, etc. An Expert Group consisting of leading academic staff from the University of Lund was associated with the policy and planning process. Finally, five public meetings were arranged. The whole process was supported and to some extent managed by the consultant company.

In Groningen an extensive deliberation process was carried out in order to renew the local transport policy. The new policy was named De Bereikbare Stad Leefbaar; The Accessible and Liveable City. A cross-sectored Project Group that included leading civil servants and two independent consultants was established with direct responsibility to the Municipal Council and the Executive Management (of the municipal administration), see [figure 1]. The Project Group was given the task to establish and facilitate an extensive and open transport policymaking and planning process, involving key stakeholders and the public in general. An extensive participation experiment, lasting 1½ year, was carried out. A number of open groupings and practices were developed in order to provide stakeholders and citizens with the opportunity to participate directly in the political process. It happened in three steps; 1) Exploration of problems and solutions: questionnaires by telephone and newspaper (5,600 answers), two public round table discussions, and 18 work groups; 2) Elaboration of policy directions: Four workshops and public meetings along with a public debate through the local media; and 3) Decision-making: a draft on concepts and visions, debate phase (written reactions, two public debates, final questionnaire), policy and plan proposal, and finally a (formal) public enquiry procedure.

INTERDEPENDENCE AND TRUST IN AALBORG, LUND AND GRONINGEN
Seen in a perspective of more than three decades, the cases illustrate that a lack of trust and acknowledgement of interdependence may result in the use (or waste) of significant resources on struggles over policy control, as will be shown in the Aalborg and Groningen cases.

Aalborg
In Aalborg, a proactive environmentally oriented transport plan for the city centre was presented in 1979. However, based in worries concerned with accessibility for cars, strong political forces among local business, the police, and the local newspaper worked strongly against the implementation of the plan, resulting in fragmentation and disintegration of the 1979 plan in the following years (see Flyvbjerg 1991 and 1998). Through the main part of the 1980s, that in its turn led to a much more cautious policy style among politicians and planners concerning local transport issues. Around 1990, new international and national impulses encircling the issue of sustainable development helped reopening local transport policy in Aalborg in a somewhat more visionary, proactive, and cooperative direction. Leading local civil servants succeeded in initiating a more

visionary view and discussion, among politicians and civil servants mostly, on transport issues from an environmental perspective. Moreover, in outspoken attempts to avoid break down situations similar to those of the aftermath of the 1979 plan, the local politicians sought, increasingly, to actively resist the influence of interest parties, in particular the local chamber of commerce. The politicians and civil servants regained control of the transport policy process. Thereby, a new process on action planning for traffic and environment was born, resulting in new plans in 1994 and 1999, and today the process continues with activities of revising the former plans.

However, from the late-1990s and onwards a growing concern, among local business in particular, for accessibility by cars and for road congestion in the city centre has, once again, put pressure to an environmentally oriented local transport policy and planning. It seems to indicate that there are unresolved issues to discuss in the relationship between, on the one hand, the local political-administrative system, and on the other hand, local business interests. Success has not been achieved in maintaining, over a longer time span, a critical mass of the interests and support concerning long-term strategic goals. Local political life on these issues seems to remain rather unstable and continuously sensitive to debates arising around isolated events or around the implementation of each new project related to the above planning.

The main reasons for that are likely to be found in a somewhat closed elitist political culture in Aalborg, where participation and collaboration processes on these issues have mostly been used in order to pragmatically test the political possibilities, rather than to more actively and openly involve, and establish (authentic) dialogue with, interests or the public in policymaking processes. Hence, the local transport policymaking process has been primarily mono-centric, hierarchical and dominated by politicians and civil servants from the Technical Administration, however with an occasional significant (sometimes decisive) influence of local business. Collaboration and more interactive approaches has been limited and based in a closed and elitist politician-civil servant framing, with few external participants (interests) in the policy process.[1] An informal network between politicians, civil servants and key actors in the city has been identified. However, it has mainly been closed to outside influence and based in personal relations and personal trust rather than generalised trust.

As Innes and Booher (2003) also found in a case on regional transportation, the actors in Aalborg do not seem to have been allowed to discover their interdependence. A significant-scale interdependent social network based in generalised trust has not been established. Similar to what Innes and Booher points out (based on several cases), the political-administrative culture in Aalborg still seem to be dominated by perceptions that categorise public participation as a separate activity for which the responsibilities of public agencies can be met with formal public hearings or advisory committees.

> Two [local] plans were made with a public pre-enquiry procedure. One plan was not because we became tired of it. People could not relate to it. They wanted to discuss concrete things, whereas we wanted to discuss how the traffic was going to be. So, we gave up. (Head of Transport Planning, until 2000)

---

[1] Within this framing, however, civil servants of the Technical Administration have collaborated skilfully across political levels (e.g. with the Danish Ministry of Environment; thereby attracting co-funding) and also across sectors within the municipal organisation. Openness to the world outside the municipal organisation has often also occurred in the sense that local civil servants have actively sought information, knowledge and inspiration from outside sources.

The failure to more broadly recognise and explore interdependence may be seen a central obstacle to develop collaborative practices in Aalborg. Lack of sufficient recognition of interdependence, as well as of mutual learning and generalised trust, seem to keep Aalborg in its unstable, occasionally conflicting and to some extent counterproductive and implementation-inefficient situation.

The lack of a shared perception of interdependence in Aalborg around a specific problem may, however, be partly explained by the lack of a genuine material problem pressure, e.g. extensive congestion and pollution. On the other hand, and referring to Bogason´s social dimension of interdependence, Aalborg's history of conflicts over local transport issues provide strong incentives in itself for the development of a common perception of interdependence, based in recognising a need for coordination. Instead of finding formats that generate trust among interdependent actors (Hajer & Wagenaar, 2003), and as a counter reaction to the history of intractability, leading local politicians have given first priority to regaining a rather traditional government control over the transport political agenda in Aalborg, and hence to solve problems on their own, as indicated here:

> Traffic planning and planning for public transport in Aalborg has always been strongly influenced by the interests of the Chamber of Commerce in Aalborg. Bent Flyvbjerg wrote a doctoral thesis some years ago, in which he to a certain extent concluded that the politicians of Aalborg were in the hands of the Chamber of Commerce. I do not think that statement was completely wrong. …this [thesis] has frightened them [politicians and civil servants] out of their wits… The thesis is referred to every time there are some relevant issues concerning the inability of politicians, and also in relation to taking the bull by the horns and make a proper traffic planning. Several times, I have heard the thesis mentioned in debates in the Municipal Council… It is when we discuss, and we say that we should be careful not to let interest organisations control everything as our predecessors did... Interest organisations were allowed to govern the development, and that is not the intention. Because, it is also a question about who is governing, who should govern, and what are the consequences if no one wants to govern? (Alderman, Technical Administration, 1998-2002)

> The Chamber of Commerce has less power than earlier – they do not have veto-power today. But, of course they try to influence politics. As for the current debate about Nytorv, I have the impression that quite a few politicians have decided not to listen to the arguments of the Chamber of Commerce. The politicians may also have the opinion that the Chamber of Commerce does not know what they are talking about – and vice versa. (Journalist for local newspaper)

However, conditions for collaborative practices may be changing these years, as indicated by the Head of the Municipal Architect's Office:

> …it is even as though we are past discussions of competition – today one is talking about networking, strengthening through interactions, sensible division of labour, etc.

Lund
While the Aalborg case may primarily tell of aspects related to a lack of interdependence and generalised trust, Lund and Groningen provide a more convincing background for discussing how interdependence and trust may be recognised and developed.

The development in Lund in the 1990s of a policy and planning aiming towards an environmentally adapted transport system was based in a process, in which a broad variety of stakeholders participated before and during the production of the first plan proposal. It was important to the success of those participatory and collaborative practices that the process was given adequate time to build consensus (i.e. transport political goals were debated for 1½ year). The long-stretched process provided the consultant in particular with the opportunity to distribute information and knowledge concerning transport and the environment to the politicians.

> The way of working together meant that we kept this [Transport] Commission informed all the time of the proceedings of our work. We explained things to them and used scientific arguments everywhere possible. We always presented them with information on our working process. This way I believe we succeeded in keeping the process going. We took one step at a time, established a consensus, and then took another step, etc. So this way, when the LundaMaTs plan was finished, there was not really any debate in the Transport Commission. The Transport Commission had worked its way through this process. It meant that all the arguments, especially from the political parties, were well known already when LundaMaTs came into the hearing- and public debate-phase. Those arguments had already, to a large extent, been part of the discussions in the Transport Commission. (Consultant responsible for the planning process)

The politicians, civil servants and stakeholders in the situation-specific organisation for transport policymaking, see figure 1, demonstrated abilities to work across sector limits as well as political levels. Furthermore, success was achieved in anchoring decisions, policies and plans broadly among key stakeholders from an early stage in the policy and planning process. As a result, the implementation of the plan has been eased significantly, and following debates and discussions on these issues have mostly been incorporated into the ongoing policy and planning process, rather than overturning, destabilising or fragmenting the process.

This rather stable political as well as implementation-efficient situation can be understood as a consequence of several factors. It is consistently recognised that Lund has a strong tradition among local political and public administrative actors to conduct proactive approaches and knowledge based discussions (socially as well as technically) concerning environmental issues. These actors seem to have been open to debate new perspectives on the relationship between society and the environment, as well as engaged in pursuing their newly gained knowledge into politics, policymaking and planning.

> I believe the politicians in Lund are relatively open in listening to others people's views. I do not believe there is any specific power alliance, which you unfortunately can see in other municipalities. I believe there is a rather good listening-climate in Lund, when it comes to listen to the citizens of Lund - for instance through our questionnaires. (Journalist, local newspaper)

The transport policymaking process was hierarchical in the way that politicians and civil servants had a firm grip on the political process and on initiating and managing the policy process. However, compared to in Aalborg, a much more poly-centric policy process was established in Lund. The Work Group and the Transport Commission controlled and managed the policy process, while collaborating with a variety of different participants and interests.

Lund seems to have acted upon a broad awareness of interdependence, need for collaboration and significant sense of generalised trust. This interdependence should then be understood in social rather than material terms; based in the social construction of an environmental problem pressure. A genuine problem pressure, in material terms, do not seem to have been present in Lund (leading local civil servants consistently recognise this in interviews). The presence of generalised trust in Lund has contributed to provide the opportunity to build a large-scale, complex, interdependent social network (borrowing from Warren, 1999), and a process of (broadly) socially constructing local transport-environmental issues and concepts around which policy is built (borrowing from Innes and Booher, 2003). Here, general trust in local authorities has allowed politicians and civil servants to be at the centre of this network and process. It has allowed the political-administrative system the transmission of public opinion into administrative power (see also Dryzek, 2000). Lund seems to have a rather unique political culture which, through ongoing and open debating between

politicians, civil servants, stakeholders and the public, continuously produce and reproduce trust and perceptions of interdependence between actors. Diversity and competing interests, e.g. among stakeholders, are actively integrated in these processes, rather than excluded.

> I would rather see this process as interplay. I see no really strong actors with obvious key roles as I have seen it in other municipalities. I do not think it is like that in Lund. It seems like a so-called learning democracy with a lot of discussions, and many things come from these discussions. Thus, it is difficult to point out key actors. …It is very valuable just to gather different actors, such as the haulage contractor business, motor organisations, cyclist organisations, trade organisations, etc., around the same table so that they start talking to each other and understand each other… I believe it was very valuable for us, as the ones who should report this, to get to known all these arguments and views *during* our work. The incorporation of all these arguments and views into LundaMaTs means that the actors can recognise their own influence when they read it. It becomes much easier to go through with things and implement these issues when people feel they have been involved and have had influence. (Consultant responsible for the planning process)

> There is a risk that some things may be filtered away, for instance issues that are difficult and does not match the administration itself. Then it is better to have people from the outside looking at the problems. There is a risk that the administration in certain ways becomes preserving. Therefore it is important occasionally to take in impulses from the outside in order to get a more critical and structural analysis of different problems. I believe that organisations stagnate if they work too much within themselves. One must have impulses from the outside. (Head of the Highways Office)

It is reasonable to conclude that Lund's political life encircling these issues in general can be characterised as, borrowing the terms of Innes and Booher (2003), a stable, robust and effective adaptive learning system that embraces and includes difference, thus creating extra resources (concerning knowledge as well as economy) and creativity in building new policies and plans.

Groningen
Groningen seems to have experienced a collective learning process over the role of trust, and it also seems that a common recognition of interdependence in the policy process has been developed and established. In 1977, a severe political confrontation was awakened in response to the top-down and overnight implementation of an environmentally oriented transport project (The Traffic Circulation Plan). The result was a major change in the local transport system, with significant reductions in car traffic in the city centre. Local business interests opposed strongly; they opposed the actual physical changes made, but they also reacted strongly and with much indignation against the non-compromising way in which those changes were implemented.

> This polarised situation was very much enlarged, or strengthened, by the way the traffic circulation [1977 project] was implemented. …they [local business] were so agitated, so angry by what had happened, by what had been done by the council and the Major and the Aldermen, so it was really hard to really work together. (Former leading civil servant)

The indignation persisted through the 1980s, however softening successively as shop owners realised that reduced accessibility and mobility by car did not lead to general reductions in turn-over. From late-1980s and onwards, a will to cooperate grew among the parties. It led to attempts to unify environmentally oriented goals in local transport policy with intentions to develop the city centre of Groningen economically. In the mid-1990s, however, a local referendum concerning a specific transport project, and a public debate associated with the referendum, indicated a declining lack in public support for the local transport policy. In response, leading local politicians and civil servants initiated the extensive deliberation process presented in the previous section.

In a rather unique way, compared to earlier local practices, the local transport policy and planning process was opened to an early and very extensive participation of organised interests as well as citizens in general. Elitist and hierarchical forms were pulled back to an extent that allowed a significant part of the policy process to be set free from the hands of politicians, civil servants and single powerful interests (such as local business). Thereby, self-organising elements was given the opportunity to evolve, e.g. in workgroups and workshops. Politicians and civil servants had to let go of some of the control of the contents of policy making and planning (especially in the early stages). They had to accept and develop roles as managers and facilitators of the process, together with the two consultants. Furthermore, the collaborative process left space and time for an open dialogue. The duration of the process was sometimes experienced by participants as being too long, but it was the slow process that made it clear and understandable to the participants that compromises had to be made across differences in opinions, interests and scenarios for solutions.

> It is like learning together. It is not the government convincing people, but convincing by finding out yourself. (Head of Urban Planning)

Thereby, Groningen has successfully moved from a situation characterised by severe conflict to a situation characterised by collaboration, interaction, and common action. It has secured a high degree of public support in favour of the resulting policy, broad political anchoring among stakeholders, and it has for the same reasons significantly eased implementation.

> After the open planning process the traffic management policy has a very broad support from politicians and from the city as a whole… you see an enormous growth of support… In itself, the traffic policy did not change after the process, but the support changed. (Head of Urban Planning in Groningen)

Earlier difficulties in the relationship between local politicians, especially left-wing politicians, and local business and trade have been replaced by intensified coordination and co-operation in the years since the mid-1990s. One example clearly indicates that collaborative and more interactive practices between these actors have been institutionalised, even in a formal setting. It is the so-called Centre Management, a public-private partnership for city centre management. It consists of a frequently meeting board with politicians (Aldermen for Maintenance, Economics, and Urban development), senior civil servants, and Chairmen from local and regional business organisations. Furthermore, a number of sub-groupings are attached. One of the main aims of this partnership is to influence urban and transport policymaking and planning for Groningen city centre.

The deliberation process in Groningen has been regarded a pioneering project in the Netherlands. It was seen as experimental and renewing because of its extensive bottom-up, dialogue-oriented and collaborative approach. The remarkable change from a somewhat unstable and occasionally openly hostile political situation to a much more stable political as well as implementation-efficient situation can be understood as a consequence of several factors. First of all, the intention of leading local politicians and civil servants was expressively to avoid a situation similar to the uncompromising attitudes, which dominated the 1970s and a good part of the 1980s. Another factor was the personal initiative and engagement of the then Alderman (1994-98) for Traffic, Transport and Economic Affairs – the Alderman did not have any significant disputes with local business and trade; on the contrary the Alderman improved relations with them.

Furthermore, leading civil servants has also demonstrated an ability to discuss and develop policy documents across sectors and offices in the Municipal Administration. Two independent consultant companies also played a role. One consultant, IPP (Institute of Public and Politics), were in charge

of managing the policymaking process, but disagreement between IPP and the civil servants developed on how the process should be managed. The civil servants, and to some extent also the Alderman, were worried that IPP would 'let things float' too much and that the process would lack structure and management. Scepticism occurred among civil servants concerning the role of being 'only' a facilitator. It reflected a worry that such a process would not produce a mature and consistent plan. However, it also indicated that the existing political and administrative culture was being challenged (and in fact changed, as exemplified above) – that it was hard for some civil servants to let go of some of their traditional tasks and responsibilities. Despite that civil servants were still responsible for the final plan, they could not control the process as they were used to, and to some the loss of control was a problem.

Hence, the situation in the aftermath of the 1977 plan produced a significant decrease in both generalised and particularised trust among key players in Groningen. It was not just a decrease in the trust of local and regional business life in local authorities; it was also a matter of strong distrust at a personal level between leading businesses and leading politicians. Interdependence was not recognised, but rather overruled by the overnight implementation of the 1977 plan. The extensive policymaking process in the 1990s can be seen as a deliberative attempt at repairing and rebuilding these relations. The success in doing so has been consolidated, e.g. through the Centre Management and the Traffic Group.

> In general, working in a process like the Polder model [Dutch model of deliberation] it is very hard to make big steps because you need to take everyone with you. As we call it in The Netherlands; small margins, little space to move… the Polder model is very much based on very good personal relations and trust. That is very important. I think we are much further now in this city at the moment with those two things, trust and personal relations, than 10-20 years ago. Absolutely. (Former leading civil servant in Groningen)

The deliberation process provided time (as indicated to be important by Bogason, 2000) and room for discovering and building interdependence and trust. Borrowing again from Innes and Booher, new relationships and social capital were built among players who would not ordinarily even talk to each other, much less do so constructively. Such relationships were not about changing the interests of stakeholders; rather it was about changing how they expressed these interests and about allowing for a more respectful dialogue. It also provided greater incentive to seek mutually satisfactory solutions, and it helped people and parties to build trust among themselves. (Innes and Booher, 2003, pp.43-44).

Apart from the strong perception of a necessity to repair social aspects there was also a commonly perceived need for coordinating the handling of identified problems concerning accessibility, congestion and local (environmental) living conditions. Hence, a material problem pressure helped underpinning the building of interdependence in Groningen.

> I think that local government is more dependent on other actors than they were in the 60s. They have to make a relation with the retailers, to depend on each other. Like the inner city; they just have to work together. So, they need each other, and for that reason I think the local government is not any more able to say – well, this is the way we do it, whether you like it or not… people do not accept anymore that somebody says - well I know this better… That is becoming more and more difficult. I think people and different parties are more depending on each other, some would say they need each other. It is very important to look at them and find out: why do they need each other, what do they want to develop, what would they like as the end result. (Participant in the deliberation process)

SOME LESSONS FOR DELIBERATIVE GOVERNANCE

The cases imply and support prescriptive conclusions that interdependence and issues of trust should be viewed and dealt with as processes. Interdependence and trust, and in particular versions of a more socially constructed perception of interdependence, can itself be (re-)established, transformed or developed through interactive and collaborative policy and planning processes. They can be learned, changed or adjusted, such as in Lund and Groningen. Interdependence and trust are essential in establishing, developing and stabilising systems and processes characterised by mutual/collective learning and collaboration – and hence also for the institutionalisation of those.

The cases also imply and suggest a broader rationale of collaborating and of choosing or allowing for the effort of discovering and developing interdependence and trust. In a fragmenting and increasingly complex and diverse reality, actors find it increasingly difficult to act alone. Acting alone may produce significant results in the short term; such as when the Chamber of Commerce in Aalborg fragmented the 1979 plan; or when a few politicians in Groningen implemented the 1977 project overnight. However, in the longer term such actions may backlash because they illustrate and warn others of a too biased and perhaps a too arrogant attempt at bending or bypassing the rules for a one-eyed purpose. The Aalborg and Groningen cases strongly suggest that the end does not always justify the means. Process and procedure matters. Actors remember; not just what was done, but in particular how it was done, as both cases illustrate. The use of harsh means by an actor negatively affects the ability of the same actor to successfully follow similar moves to achieve new ends. See also Innes and Booher (2003, p.55) for similar conclusions.

Based on the lessons from the cases, this author tentatively suggests that formats for collaboration and deliberative governance, and in particular for generating trust among interdependent actors, should recognise and consider the following aspects:

The extent of a genuine materially present and documented local problem pressure, or a more exclusively social constructed problem pressure (e.g. without any hands-on documentation for actual negative effects or consequences), are both important. In particular when they occur in unison they act as a strong incentive and driving force for common action. While the first version of problem pressure may indeed help construct the latter, it is however not to be considered a necessary precondition. The Lund case illustrates that problems may well be constructed and agreed upon without an extreme and overwhelming problem pressure.

The more openness on situation-specific knowledge and different interests; the greater the opportunity for collaboration between actors to result in broad anchoring of goals, strategies and solutions. In addition, the earlier and the more direct the involvement in new policy practices of various relevant interest groups and citizens, the greater the possibility and constructive ability to deal with difference and diversity in opinion and interest – and thereby possibly to identify, eliminate or neutralise barriers and objections to a future plan implementation. Thereby, existing or potential conflicts may be managed before they gain a somewhat more significant negative influence through other channels. The Consultant, who was responsible for the policymaking and planning process in Lund, elaborates:

> We had worked with a number of projects when we started discussing the role and importance of consultations *during* the working process – not just after. It is important to bring in a number of different actors already during the work with the report. We proposed this process from the start… I believe it has worked… We added a Planning Council with a number of different actors and representatives for business & trade, the police, the health sector, etc. It was a very broad range of actors, with whom we had a large number of meetings and discussions – also as our

work proceeded with the LundaMaTs report. We constantly received views from these actors during our work. It was exceptionally valuable. We have suggested this set-up in other assignments afterwards.

Difference and diversity need not to be equalised or eradicated in deliberative processes, rather it should become an integrative, productive and preferable also creative part of the social construction and anchoring of new agendas and new solutions. One need not necessarily agree on everything in deliberative processes. Given that there is time and opportunity for developing or adapting, in cooperation, to common narratives for a common future, there is often also room for different arguments and motives leading to the commonly agreed upon outcome. See also Dryzek (2000).

Looking at the 1½ year of the LundaMaTs process, I do not believe it can be done much faster than that – because it is a process. If you want all these discussions between different actors and a consultation council, then it will not function if you do it significantly faster. If you seriously want to do it this way, it takes 1-1½ year. People need time to take all this material and all these thoughts into account. (Consultant responsible for the planning process in Lund)

Close collaborative links between traditional government practices and new open and situation-specific deliberative practices should be further developed. In doing so, traditional political-administrative settings must discuss pragmatic, practical and problem-based opportunities for decentralising tasks to more flexible (e.g. cross-sectored, cross-levelled and/or public-private) and self-organising units and processes – while maintaining or adjusting procedures and (own) settings so that democratic legitimacy can still be accounted for. Shared responsibility should not imply decreasing responsibility of politicians and planners, e.g. to attend to risks that cannot be ignored, such as climate change. Rather, it should imply a change in the role of politicians and planners towards still more interaction, increased participation, facilitation and mediation as well as increased communication. The Lund case illustrates a combined solution, in which the establishment of the Transport Commission was an example of, on the one hand, a situation-specific policymaking setting based in deliberative practices, and on the other hand, the same setting had clear links to the established political system.

It was such a great task, and with such great implications, that it had to be anchored broadly and at a high political level. Here, the Municipal Council was the appropriate level. Thus, the Transport Commission became directly responsible to the Municipal Council. The politicians wanted this strong coupling. The `heavy´ politicians were put in this Transport Commission, and all political parties were represented. That was surely the right thing to do if one considers the weight of the result and the debate that would come. It would not work to let one of the board's deal with this. There were many interests to be taken into account. Given that, the Municipal Council was the right place to weigh these interests. (Former Head of Transport Planning in Lund)

Politicians and planners may benefit from improving their skills of coordinating and managing new and more interactive policy processes, rather than to focus too one-eyed on controlling the contents of political processes. In doing so, it is important, as Edelenbos (2005, pp. 130-131) also points out, that key politicians and planners are involved from the beginning of such new and more interactive processes, and that they play an active role in discussing and confirming the process design for the interactive process, such as in Lund and Groningen. If those actors are not engaged actively and constructively in forming the process, they may increasingly find such processes uninteresting and irrelevant, and ultimately deem them insignificant in relation to their own political agenda. Ongoing feedback mechanisms between key actors should also be established and prioritised.

Finally, in designing, coordinating and managing more interactive policymaking processes, politicians and planners should be careful to provide information and knowledge as well as to create a genuine room and opportunity for learning and change. In some cases, as the Groningen case is

also an example of, it implies that actors in deliberative participatory practices should be given time and possibility to learn and see what planners may already know, as discussed here by a former leading civil servant in Groningen:

> …when you are doing something like this you have to incorporate the citizens so that they can give their opinion. When you are doing something with participatory processes it gives people the possibility to express their opinion. Then you need to be sure that something can be changed. It is maybe a kind of trick, but it is important not to give the best for those participatory processes. Start with a plan in which things can be changed… because otherwise they will not accept it. All those plans… always have a compromise, you have to make a balance between the interests of all the parties involved. And if you are doing too good a job starting that process [as a planner], then there is nothing to re-balance latter on… That is the way to cover the situation. So that in the end all parties involved are satisfied with the results, because they realise that there has been compromised, and they realised that there is a good balance, and realise that there are other interests who also need to be covered in that plan. …you can manage a lot by giving the right information at the right moment, because in those working groups there is also a process going on, people are thinking about things, making decisions, and going a certain way in thinking. It is very important to give information at the right moment, to make them decide to go this or that way… The other way is that I think that those processes should not give a very detailed plan, a very detailed picture of what should happen, but more general ideas that can be worked out latter on by people who have the right information and expertise... Then you have the support of lots of people for the plans.

In conclusion, deliberative governance can illuminate conflicting relations and provoke or massage those early in policy and planning processes; conflicts that would have emerged and backfired on the process anyway. The early discovery in such processes of problems, imbalances and differences in interests and opinions may improve the chance to establish and implement workable compromises on goals and solutions.

REFERENCES

Bogason, P. & Kensen, S. & Miller, H. T. eds. (2004) *Tampering with Tradition. The Unrealized Authority of Democratic Agency*, Lexington Books.

Bogason, P. (2000) *Public Policy and Local Governance: Institutions in Postmodern Society*, Edward Elgar.

Castells, M. (1996) *The Rise of the Network Society*, Oxford University Press.

Dryzek, J. S. (2000) *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond: Liberals, Critics, Contestations*, Oxford University Press.

Edelenbos, J. (2005) Institutional Implications of Interactive Governance: Insights from Dutch Practice, *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions*, Vol. 18, No. 1, January, pp. 111-134, Blackwell Publishing.

Flyvbjerg, B. (1998) *Rationality and Power: Democracy in Practice.* The University of Chicago Press, Illinois (In Danish in 1991, see reference above).

Flyvbjerg, B. (1991) *Rationalitet og Magt (Bind II)*, Akademisk Forlag, Odense, Denmark.

Forester, J. (1999) *The Deliberative Practitioner: Encouraging Participatory Planning Processes*, The MIT Press.

Hajer, M. A. & Wagenaar, H. eds. (2003) *Deliberative Policy Analysis: Understanding Governance in the Network Society,* Cambridge University Press.

Hansen, C. J. (2002) Local Transport Policy and Planning. The Capacity to Deal with Environmental Issues. Ph.D. thesis, *Department of Development and Planning*, Aalborg University.

Innes, J. E. & Booher, D. E. (2003) Collaborative policymaking: governance through dialogue, in Hajer, M. A. & Wagenaar, H. eds. *Deliberative Policy Analysis: Understanding Governance in the Network Society,* Cambridge University Press.

Kooiman, J. ed. (1993) *Modern Governance: New Government-Society Interaction*, Sage Publications.

Offe, C. (1999) How can we trust our fellow citizens? in Warren, M. E. ed. *Democracy and Trust*, Cambridge University Press.

Sehested, K. (2002) *Netværksstyring i byer: Hvad med planlægningen og demokratiet?[Network Management in Cities: How about Planning and Democracy?]* Jurist- og Økonomforbundets forlag, Denmark.

Stoker, G. (1998) Governance as theory: five propositions. *Int. Social Science Journal*, no. 155, pp. 17-28.

Uslaner, E. M. (1999) Democracy and social capital, in Warren, M. E. ed. *Democracy and Trust*, Cambridge University Press.

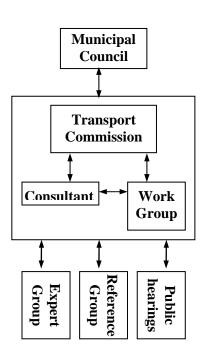Warren, M. E. ed. (1999) *Democracy and Trust*, Cambridge University Press.

Table 1. Significant transport policy and planning initiatives from an environmental perspective in Lund, Groningen, and Aalborg. (Titles translated, comments added in *Italics*).

Lund	Groningen	Aalborg
1969: Municipal Council decision: *Abandoning of plans for 4-lane road through city centre* **1972**: Traffic and Environment, plan: *Restrictions for private cars in city centre, introduction of parking fees* **1985**: Traffic in the Inner City of Lund, plan: *Pedestrian areas, public transport initiatives, new bus station at the railway station, bicycling facilities* **1999**: LundaMaTs, plan: *Ambition to establish an environmentally adapted transport system in Lund*	**1972**: Municipal Council decision: *Lower acceptance levels of noise and air pollution and improved conditions for pedestrians in city centre* **1977**: Traffic Circulation Plan: *Zoning of inner city – no crossing in private car of zone boundaries. Inner road ring. Expansion of pedestrian areas* **1987**: Master Plan: *Integration of offices, public transport and bicycle facilities around the railway station* **1993**: Hand on Heart, a New City Centre for Groningen, plan: *The "compact city" concept. Park-and-Ride facilities* **1996**: City for a New Century, Groningen in 2005, Master Plan: *Mix of public transport measures, new parking facilities, improvement of existing ring roads* **1997**: The Accessible and Liveable City policy and plan: *Ambition to improve local economic development while improving housing and living conditions*	**1975**: Municipal Council decision: *Abandoning of plans for extension of a road through city centre* **1979**: Plan proposal for area use and transport in city centre: *Public transport improvements, restrictions for private cars* **1994**: Action Plan for Traffic and Environment: *Public transport improvements, bicycle facilities, traffic calming of city centre* **1996**: Traffic and Environment Plan for Aalborg City Centre: *parking policies, public transport, visual improvements of pedestrian areas, restrictions for private cars* **1999**: 2nd Action Plan for Traffic and Environment: *Ambition to ensure a sustainable development by weighing the need for good transport options and limitation of environmental disturbances*

Figure 1. The project organisations leading to transport policies and plans from an environmental perspective in Lund (1999), Groningen (1997), and Aalborg (1999).