

**WVAB**



**Working in place:  
Collaborative funding in practice**  
*Partnership Drugs Initiative:  
A national approach to local  
funding in Scotland*



# Acknowledgements

*With thanks to our interviewees who took the time to support this research and shared their experiences with us openly and honestly.*

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Funders of the Partnership Drugs Initiative:



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*This case study is one of five exploring how independent charitable funders and local, regional and national public agencies can work together in a given geographic area.*

The case studies are part of IVAR's wider work on place-based funding approaches, which includes *Working in Place: A framework for developing and designing place-based funding approaches* and *Working in Place: Collaborative funding in practice*.

This document shares the learning on independent and public funders working together in place from the perspective of the key partners involved. It is based on interviews with the funders, steering group members, partners and grantees as well as a document review of reports produced by the Partnership Drugs Initiative (PDI).

For the full research series, please visit  
[www.ivar.org.uk/research-projects/place-based-funding/](http://www.ivar.org.uk/research-projects/place-based-funding/)

# The Partnership Drugs Initiative 'at a glance'

The Partnership Drugs Initiative (PDI) is run by the Corra Foundation in partnership with Scottish Government and The Robertson Trust. The Corra Foundation was previously called Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland, it changed its name following a rebrand in 2017. Hereafter we refer to the Corra Foundation as 'the Foundation'. Some of the direct quotations from participants refer to 'Lloyds' or 'Lloyds Foundation' in recognition of the name at the time of interviews. The PDI provides funding to charities working with children and young people affected by substance issues, and produces insights for policy and practice. It operates across Scotland, working with regional Alcohol and Drug Partnerships and third sector organisations to align funding to local needs.

PDI began in 2001. Since then, it has made over 300 grants to work supporting children and young people affected by substance issues. All of these grants had match funding, the majority of which was from local statutory partners.

The main aims of the initiative are to:

- Increase the well-being of children and young people (0–25) in Scotland affected by substance issues.<sup>1</sup>
- Help develop and influence both local and national policy.

## Who provided funding?

- **Corra Foundation – £500,000 per year**
- **Scottish Government (Child Protection and Substance Misuse Team)**  
– approximately £700,000 per year
- **The Robertson Trust – £500,000 per year**

<sup>1</sup>In 2017, PDI will publish revised criteria that will extend the age range from pre-birth to 26.

The funding is used to give grants to locally based projects to support children and young people affected by substance issues. It also goes towards activity by the funders and partners to raise awareness and disseminate learning from across the portfolio of funded projects, and supporting grant applicants and grantees as needed.

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## Timescale of the initiative

PDI started in 2001. The initiative is ongoing – it is one of the Foundation’s core strategic programmes. The grants given through PDI are for an initial three years with potential for up to two years tapered continuation funding.

## Summary learning

This section summarises what we have learned about place-based collaborative funding from the Partnership Drugs Initiative.

- **A national programme working locally** – PDI is a national programme aimed at funding in an informed way locally. The specific issue of children and young people affected by substance issues helps to provide some structure and parameters to frame the work locally and help PDI understand the kinds of partners that the work requires. The partners have found that, in order to fund effectively at a local level, you need to work closely with individuals with the skills and experience to provide insight into pertinence of ‘place’ for any given project. This is also one of the ways they have tried to reduce the risk of the PDI ‘parachuting in’ – for example by recruiting a project lead with a background (and therefore perceived legitimacy) in the area.

In addition, PDI is guided by a steering group comprised of academics, voluntary and local public sector representatives, and senior practitioners in social work and community health. It also works closely with relevant regional bodies (Alcohol and Drug Partnerships) to ensure that the Initiative can make an informed assessment about the relevance and role of place to a given project.

- **Managing and sharing power** – The lead organisation, the Foundation, has established a culture of learning and partnership working, which is reflected in the structures of PDI. For example, a range of different voices are engaged in strategy setting and decision-making, from young people to grantees, to experts in the field of substance issues.

Considerable effort has been invested in drawing together a wide range of partners with different backgrounds and experience, and developing working practices that try to ensure one voice doesn’t dominate, for example, a steering group carefully chaired by someone skilled and respected by the group.

- **Exit and sustainability** – PDI places an emphasis on helping funded projects think beyond the funding term and linking them to resources and support related to this. In earlier years of the Initiative, it focused on asking grantees to explain how they were going to sustain the work beyond their grant. However, this has now moved to a focus on sustaining learning and supporting projects to do this. For example, PDI provided two years' continuation funding to one project to enable them to train and embed their approach into the practice of local statutory agencies. The funding continued service provision for the additional two years but also upskilled staff during that time. Grant applicants are now asked two questions about future planning – will they need funding beyond three years (and what plans are in place for thinking about this)? And, how can PDI share the learning?



To fund effectively at a local level you need to work closely with individuals with the skills and experience to provide insight into the role place plays for each project.

## 3.0

# About the Partnership Drugs Initiative

The Partnership Drugs Initiative (PDI) started in 2001 with the aim of supporting the voluntary and community sector to have a greater influence at a local level and to support children and young people affected by substance issues:

*‘Overall it’s about addressing and preventing the impact of drug and alcohol abuse on children and young people – we have a very clear aim.’*

(Steering group member)

Participants described PDI as able to achieve these aims by working in a long-term way with a focus on early intervention.

PDI is one of two core grants programmes led by the Foundation: *‘it is one of our key areas of delivery’*. The Foundation and Scottish Government were the founding funders of the initiative, a move that sought to bring together the Foundation’s grant-making expertise with government insight into policy and evidence.

PDI provides grants to frontline projects supporting children and young people affected by substance issues. All projects must be designed in consultation with regional Alcohol and Drug Partnerships<sup>2</sup> (ADPs) to ensure that funding meets local need and is aligned with local context. Funding applicants have to demonstrate how the project *‘will add and contribute to the local sector’* (independent funder). The focus is on *‘investing in local projects that can really make a difference for families’* (Grantee).

The connection with ADPs was also thought to provide a greater likelihood that the work will be sustained in future:

<sup>2</sup>Responsibility for local drug and alcohol treatment is devolved to Scotland’s 30 Alcohol and Drug Partnerships to commission evidence-based, person-centred and recovery-focused treatment services. Alcohol and Drug Partnerships are accountable to local Community Planning Partnerships. [www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Services/Alcohol/treatment](http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Services/Alcohol/treatment)

*'It's about not considering bids in isolation but focusing on the difference that they will make to children as part of our strategic objectives, so we don't end up funding something that won't stick because it is always going to be aligned with our local agenda.'*

(Statutory partner)

ADPs included in the case study talked about their work trying to demonstrate the need for more joined-up partnership working across different agencies and said that PDI aligned well with this. One ADP lead explained that they were taking a 'whole population approach' to supporting children and young people affected by substance issues in their area. The local strategic board wanted to move towards a more preventative model but recognised that *'moving services and funding is often challenging'*:

*'What we identified is that there was a lack of early intervention around young people and that drug issues, criminal justice issues etc. may prevent young people accessing services.'*

(ADP lead)

Here, PDI funding had made a new programme possible, enabling them to develop a service in partnership with Barnardo's and to use a partnership approach to involve the statutory, voluntary and private sectors, and also engage the wider community.

PDI staff at the Foundation emphasised to us: *'we don't want to hear about national policies or national statistics in the proposals; instead we want to know who they've spoken to and how this will add to what is happening locally in terms of need and existing services.'*

## 3.1

# Key elements of PDI

### Responding to need around a particular issue

PDI was created in response to the Foundation receiving a rise in applications from charities to tackle drug and alcohol issues: *'the trustees felt like this was an issue that was coming from local communities so they wanted to do something about it'* (Independent funder). The Foundation approached Scottish Government (then called 'Scottish Executive') based on a decision that, if they were going to work in this area, they wanted to take the opportunity to do things differently. The overall aim was to: help get voluntary and community organisations a bigger voice at the table; help people to recognise the role young people can play in designing and delivering work; and *'go beyond better outcomes to focus on understanding the **why** and **how** for young people'* (Government funder).

At the time, there were limited services for children and young people affected by substance misuse, creating a genuine gap in provision to which PDI might make a contribution. We heard a similar story from other partners we spoke to – voluntary organisations and ADP members – who had seen a need to support children, young people and their families around substance issues and recognised the need to do this by working in a different way.

### Changing policy

From the outset, PDI had an explicit aim of using learning from grantees to try to develop policy and practice. Over the last ten years or so, much of this work has focused on the importance of children and young people's involvement and voice in delivery of services for children and young people affected by substance issues.<sup>3</sup> One case study participant described the policy and influencing aim of PDI as: *'I think it's about disrupting the status quo a bit – it is slow work but we can find pockets'* (Grantee).

As a partner in PDI, Scottish Government said, *'from the perspective of the child*

<sup>3</sup>See *Everyone Has a Story* – <https://www.ltsbfoundationforscotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Everyone-Has-a-Story-Overview-Report.pdf>

*protection team – it's been about helping the PDI to align with national policy, because we need to demonstrate to ministers how all funding meets our aims and targets.'*

While PDI has been going for over 15 years, it was still thought to be a relatively unique model and approach:

*'It was quite unique when it started and some parts I think probably are still unique – like the action learning, support we provide to projects, pushing the learning up to the government and the investment and focus we place on relationships'.*

(Independent funder)

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### **Trying to give money differently – a new funding approach and funding new approaches**

As well as being borne from a need in communities and a desire to shift policy, PDI has been about giving funding in a different way. That is based on the desire to support, and understand, what works:

*'Not always seeking innovation and recreating – Lloyds [TSB Foundation for Scotland] get that keeping going what works is also important. And they have a parallel side of the PDI which is research and, again, this says relationships and listening are what is important rather than "here's the 1,2,3 how to do it".'*

(Steering group member, voluntary organisation)

Some participants talked of PDI as able to give money in a more meaningful

way, compared with other funders. For example, one interviewee had received feedback from a project about the difference between local authority and PDI funding: *'they [the project] said that they do not fund in quite the same way - the local authority is more numbers driven in terms of reporting, a little more tick box whereas PDI is about driving towards quality provision and evidencing change for children. I think it's measured in a more meaningful way'* (Government funder).

## 4.0

# How PDI works in practice

## 4.1

### Design and delivery

PDI provides grants to work aimed at supporting children and young people affected by substance issues. The process is facilitated by: an engaged grant-making approach; working closely with ADPs; a PDI steering group; and a young person's advisory group.

#### The grants process

PDI uses a multi-stage grant-making process which draws in a wide range of partners – voluntary organisations, young people, ADPs, statutory partners, Scottish Government, and independent funders.

#### PDI grants process:

1. Announcement to ADPs and local organisations of funding (it is not an open application process and applicants need to contact the Foundation by phone to begin). Alongside this, there are also some proactive proposals that PDI develops with individual ADPs.
2. Conversations between PDI staff and projects: *'we'll tell them to talk with the ADP if they haven't already or contact the ADP and let them know it's happening. PDI look at drafts for the proposal and feedback to them from the steering group and our young people's group'* (Independent funder).
3. Applicants are notified of feedback and a meeting is held to discuss this. If they are recommended to proceed then they meet with PDI, the local ADP and partners to develop a full stage proposal (*'design and refine'*).

4. Final proposals are assessed by the PDI steering group, with PDI staff providing additional insights at the meeting from their engagement with local partners and applicants.
5. Recommendations are given (Fund, Unsuccessful, Resubmit) and the Foundation's trustees make the final decisions. The steering group is trusted to provide sound judgement: *'we've never had a board turn the steering group's recommendation down'* (Independent funder).
6. The Foundation's trustees give final decisions and all applicants receive a call from PDI staff to notify them of the outcome.

The Foundation's PDI team provides advice and guidance to applicants throughout the process. This is the beginning of an ongoing relationship which grantees reflected was useful in itself:

*'It is really helpful – Lloyds [TSB Foundation for Scotland] process means they very seldom discount you at the beginning but instead work with applicants to reflect on the project plan. Funding generally is so competitive and grant makers have the power but not always in the right direction. Lloyds [TSB Foundation for Scotland] knows what it is like in the community and how difficult this work can be. They are looking to give rather than to make the process hard.'*

(Grantee)

This process is also one way in which PDI aims to counter the potential risk of larger organisations 'scooping up' funding, thus maintaining a degree of equity: *if we, as the steering group, can't see how an application links with local need then we will not recommend it is funded immediately but [PDI staff] will work with them. This enables smaller organisations to have a chance'* (Steering group member, ADP lead).

The range of expertise within PDI, and the access to networks that this brings, provide the insight into local need that was felt to be crucial to making informed judgements about what is needed:

*‘The proposals have to be realistic – we will say that this needs more money – and we will involve local partners to help look at how this will work. There is too much being done for not enough money. Sometimes the steering group will write to the strategic leads to challenge them about the work. We will feed learning and key messages about this to the Scottish government too.’*

(Independent funder)

In this way, ADPs keep the focus on the local area for the PDI, providing a strategic framework and ensuring that work funded is embedded in the local context and plans for the area.

**Example:** a grantee organisation providing therapeutic support to kinship carers in Glasgow, which was set up by local carers and driven by the local council community lead. During the PDI application process they were uncertain of securing match funding. The Foundation stepped in to broker relationships with other potential funders: *‘it looked like they weren’t going to get it from Glasgow City so initially we funded it with matched money from Big Lottery.’* Since then, the service has proved popular and attracted high demand: *‘they started to get calls about whether they could provide in south Glasgow too so we started the process with them again, working with the ADP in south Glasgow to get development funding to replicate it.’* The first programme has now been going for three years, but it is at the end of its match funding term and had an agreement for two years’ continuation funding from PDI (at a reduced rate). At this point it therefore had two projects needing funding – continuation match funding for the first project and fresh match funding for the newly developed extension work. Again, the Foundation took a proactive and pragmatic approach: *‘we discussed the programme with Big and got them to fund both together as a Glasgow City-wide project – they agreed the outcomes and evaluation and said that the project could just give them a copy of their monitoring report to us so they don’t do it twice.’*

### Decision-making and the PDI steering group

The PDI steering group is one of the primary structures of PDI – it is responsible for assessing grant applications, making funding recommendations and offering guidance and advice on PDI’s strategic direction. The group has been entrusted by the Foundation’s trustees to oversee the programme and has 14 members. It is chaired by a Foundation trustee with expertise in the issues supported through PDI. Membership comprises: voluntary organisations, ADPs, statutory partners, social workers, central government, independent funders, and academics. This breadth was seen as providing insights into both local on-the-ground need, national policy and the specific needs of children and young people affected by substance issues.

While the steering group was established at the outset of PDI, its role and composition has evolved over time:

*‘At the beginning we, well the Foundation’s trustees, had grant-making experience but not of delivery or designing services – so we brought together a group that did. That could provide insight into what works, what is realistic and feasible. That group has expanded from experts to also include people from other local areas who have a breadth of knowledge locally and from different perspectives.’*

(Independent funder)

Participants felt that the breadth of membership created an opportunity for learning and positive challenge. They shared their experience of disagreements and differences in opinion – either about the overall direction of PDI or individual grant applications – but all were in agreement that it provided helpful friction:

*'We are there because we are different. That is the point – to not always see eye-to-eye and we are a richer committee because of that. For that to work it has to be led in a way that allows for openness. It is well chaired, there is time to debate applications AND come together to reflect on strategy at regular points so we are all aligned to the wider aims, have a chance to contribute and 'own' the strategy.'*

(Statutory partner, ADP lead)

*'There have been differences – we have large and small organisations in the mix, grantees, everyone has their own organisational objectives but we work really well together. The whole point of the steering group and strategy group is to surface those questions and differences.'*

(Steering group member, voluntary organisation)

Participants mentioned the benefit of a yearly strategy session to review key priorities (e.g. geographic coverage, age groups covered, types of services funded) as one way to help the steering group to retain a sense of ownership of the programme. This was thought to also make it less likely that individuals would bring personal bias or gripes to the table: *'We are all part of this and that helps us have ownership'* (Steering group member, ADP lead).

As a result of both the staged application process and the individuals brought in to advise, oversee and govern, one participant described PDI as: *'the most fair and informed model of funding I've been involved in – and I think that is down to the culture and values'* (Steering group member, voluntary organisation).

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## How PDI connects to need/young people

From the outset of PDI, the Foundation was keen to involve young people in decision-making processes as a reflection of its values, culture and commitment to the rights of children and young people. To this end, there is a young person's group which reviews grant applications. Participants explained the value that this adds: *'they ask questions directly in a way that we sometimes don't, like "how do you know?". They'll provide challenge free from the politeness that we might have'* (Independent funder). The PDI team works with the young people's group and then provides feedback to the steering group in the form of written and verbal reports. All participants felt that PDI managed to truly involve young people meaningfully and that doing so added value to both their work and the contribution of PDI:

*'The engagement and involvement of young people is so well done with the PDI. I love that and aspire to be able to do that. It's harder in my policy role to be able to but young people's involvement is so important. And PDI is working with exactly the children who are also affected by child protection – it is directly aligned with our work.'*

(Government funder)

The involvement of young people was seen as key to living the values of PDI but also building credibility, particularly with policy makers.

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## How PDI connects to the local, Alcohol and Drug Partnerships

As noted earlier, ADPs are key partners for PDI and the mechanism through which all grant applicants need to work – they are a key source of local context and knowledge for PDI. The Foundation lead explained:

*‘The business approach is to work in partnership with ADPs and use match funding to make the most of the funds available by getting the right people involved. It is a partnership approach with communities which is built into the structure because applicants have to demonstrate that they have spoken with communities and worked with them to develop the work. They need to evidence this to us in terms of having links with education, health, other voluntary organisations. The projects need to be part of a plan for the community. It’s about both demonstrating need and listening to the people you’ll be providing a service to.’*

(Independent funder)

This connection was viewed as a valuable opportunity by the ADPs involved in the case study, in helping them to drive forward their local strategy:

*‘This is really important, the PDI is interested in how to work with you [the applicant] to develop strategic approaches locally and how best to put together financial packages to support that ... previously endorsement by the ADP was sometimes tokenistic and it didn’t necessarily consider what the long-term sustainability would be but [Foundation PDI lead] had a session with us about our strategy and aims and funding and where the PDI could add value to that in terms of funding and expertise (drawing on their knowledge of services delivered across Scotland). So now we can see what contribution any given project is making to our strategy and therefore it’s more likely we will find ways to fund it in future and help sustain the work.’*

(ADP Lead and statutory funder)

As the quote above illustrates, the engagement of ADPs, as the organisation drawing together and overseeing local strategy to support children and young

people affected by substance issues, was also seen as central to thinking about exit and sustainability of work funded in the PDI.

## 4.3

# Relationships

As has been illustrated so far, relationships appear to be crucial to the work of the PDI. Participants described this as something that the Foundation has consciously invested time in developing and cultivating; it is a central part of their role in the PDI:

*'You need to have honest relationships with grantees and encourage them to share. We try to support relationships between projects and local players (we brought the ADP and projects together, the brokering role we play is important).'*

(Independent funder)

In relation to this, the Foundation has a specific view about its role and contribution in the PDI: *'We are the channel for feeding up information from on the ground – so it is not necessarily about us taking everything forward but looking at who is best to move things on.'* Some of this way of working has roots beyond PDI – it is part of the Foundation's wider culture and values and something it has given a lot of consideration to, for example we heard that the Foundation *'developed criteria about partners needing to add value and be in line with our ethics – they have to sign up to the values and aims and ethos of the programme, we've learned the importance of this.'*

Developing the relationships required by PDI has taken considerable time to achieve and requires active management by Foundation staff: *'She [Foundation PDI lead] is very proactive with our relationships and that helps – she meets us monthly and makes links to other areas of their work or partners. She's arranged visits for us or the minister to see projects'* (Government funder).

The effort put into relationship development appears to have paid off, with the participants from ADPs and grantee organisations all describing the relationship with the Foundation through PDI as very positive, particularly in comparison to other

fundings who some felt put up significant barriers and do not support applicants in the same way that the Foundation does:

*‘They are the most transparent, good funders that I’ve ever come into contact with. This work is a bit like giving power to communities – it’s the people who want the money who are making the decisions.’*

(Grantee)

Holding relationships with local structures was seen as essential – specifically for the Foundation as a national organisation leading the programme remotely (i.e. with no link to a specific area). This was described as a key reason for PDI being guided by the insight and advice from ADPs about local context and need: *‘they are the main route in and then we will ask who else should be involved’*. This is also (as noted earlier) supplemented by insight from the steering group and the grant-making process:

*‘We say we don’t know – we don’t know what their community is like and then we will listen and reflect if helpful. Visiting is really important, it makes the relationship. All applicants get visited when we are developing the proposal and then during the grant. It helps us to get a feel for it, to see the reality.’*

(Independent funder)

The importance of being well-networked, trusted and outward-looking also appeared to be reflected in the kinds of organisations that PDI funds. Since the application process requires demonstration of these aspects, funding is therefore given to organisations that are well-connected locally. One grantee even noted that they were only able to deliver the work **because** of the existing relationships they had with local organisations and people: *‘We were able to take up the opportunity and work around early intervention because we had the foundations in place’* (Grantee).

At this stage – having been running for over 15 years – PDI has a well-developed relationship with Scottish Government. However, the Foundation has worked hard over the years to ensure the partnership is held at an institutional level rather than with any one person to minimise the risk when individuals leave:

*‘We have good relationships and recognise where this work sits in the policy landscape but people move on every couple of years so that is hard, always having to start again. But it pays to play a long game, investing in relationships as sometimes people move into more senior positions which can be helpful for us too.’*

(Independent funder)

Participants were clear that having a strong vision had helped to sustain and galvanise PDI partners and was seen as crucial to keeping the relationships going over the years:

*‘The Scottish Government and Lloyds [TSB Foundation for Scotland] have a long-term partnership and a shared vision, we align clearly and that has really helped with building good relationships.’*

(Government funder)

Finally, the way of working and style of relationships within PDI were viewed as a beneficial opportunity by those working in local areas, with one ADP representative reflecting that the flexibility and support provided by PDI was *‘refreshing’* and that others might take a similar approach to *‘being braver’*.

## 4.4

### The kinds of individuals required for this work

The findings from the case study highlight the importance of key individuals in holding the range of relationships that are at the heart of PDI. The Foundation has placed an explicit focus on cultivating relationships that can enable this work, and participants spoke often of the ability of one individual – the PDI and Strategic Support Manager at the Foundation – to foster these:

*‘So much of it is down to individuals – it’s [name of PDI and Strategic Support Manager] really. I really trust the PDI and that is down to her. It feels like a relationship with integrity, patience, knowledge. She really demonstrates and models the relationships and the value that the PDI places on them – working with young people is not tokenistic, the PDI has a panel of young people who assess grants and really have a say in where money goes.’*

(Government funder)

In addition, the steering group for PDI is comprised of individuals drawn in for their breadth of knowledge rather than to represent any one organisation:

*‘I’m not there as Children 1st but because of my wider experience. I’m there to provide the voice of the sector in terms of experience and knowledge. Any conflict of interest re grants for Children 1st I will leave the meeting for.’*

(Steering group member, voluntary organisation)

*‘I’ve always known that no one profession has the only contribution to make – to be effective you have to work in partnerships and not be precious. Children and families live within community groups and therefore services need to reflect that.’*

(Steering group member, ADP lead)

The individuals involved appear to be those who are open to working collaboratively, can keep children and young people at the forefront of the work and have extensive on-the-ground experience. Indeed, the latter is something that the Foundation has learned is important in its management of PDI. The process to date has demonstrated that it helps to have someone with credibility because of their expertise/experience in the drug and alcohol field, and this learning has been applied when recruiting a programme lead.

## 5.0

# Benefits of PDI

## 5.1

# Benefits for children and young people

Running since 2001, PDI has made over 300 grants to organisations supporting children and young people affected by substance issues. The direct benefits of these individual grants would be too many to cover in this case study. Instead, we focus here on the perceived benefits of the Initiative as a whole as described by our case study interviewees.

The funding was seen as enabling organisations to try new things without fear of failure because PDI is flexible and focused on learning.

### **We heard about PDI support for:**

- A community health group driven to meet the needs of people using low level engagement, which often involved working across the community with large numbers of people. The project found itself needing to amend the number of families they hoped to engage with as they began to recognise that more time was required to help people maintain engagement, feel safe and, if required, access more intensive support at a time and pace right for them.
- Another organisation which explained that it ran group activities on a responsive basis but decided to be more proactive with the PDI grant and requested a lump sum to draw from in order to respond to needs as they arose, rather than *'scrabbling around for little pots all the time'*. At the end of the grant term they had an underspend but explained: *'it was great, normally if you don't spend the money you lose it but we negotiated with Lloyds [TSB Foundation for Scotland] that we could redirect the funds which meant we didn't end up wasting money where it wasn't really needed'* (Grantee).

PDI has supported the development and use of more holistic, family-focused models, which listen to the voice of the child and are complementary to the statutory offer, for example, a local kinship care service which an ADP worked

with to develop the service in a new area *'because they can provide support in a different way to what we as the local authority can do – their kinship care is more supportive and not so much focused on regulation'* (Statutory partner).

Finally, participants talked of the benefit of genuine involvement of children and young people in making more informed decisions:

*'It is never tokenistic from our children and young people group to grantees. We are genuinely interested to listen, learn and respond.'*  
(Independent funder)

*'The way the findings have been produced and messaged is quite different to what I've seen before. At the back of the report is a super clear section which tells each audience how they could respond, what to do next if they are a funder or commissioner, etc ... it has been at the forefront of my mind while we've been reviewing our planning and strategy and I will be referring back to it ... I had a parliamentary report that I've rewritten because of the findings – I decided not to go down a certain route because of what Everyone Has a Story says about involvement being too tokenistic, so now I'm looking at it again.'*  
(Government funder)

## 5.2

### Benefits for the organisations and partners involved

Participants talked about the benefit of working with an initiative which values relationships and true partnerships. For some, grantees particularly, the focus on building relationships face-to-face had helped them to feel respected and valued: *'they are always keen to meet and visit us which is not common at all – it's so hard to get people above the central belt and we often feel like we are at the*

*other end of the country – it's never felt like that with the PDI.* The majority of those interviewed said that they and their organisations had benefited simply from the opportunities to share and learn what PDI provides:

*'We've been invited to workshops, conferences, events. It's been great to share with others. Last year we were part of some action research on young people's experience of their parent's recovery and a member of staff sat on the action group and met grantees across the country. That was so beneficial ... The value beyond the money is feeling like you are part of something bigger.'*  
(Grantee)

This included the chance for issue-specific learning – about the needs of children and young people affected by substance issues – but also a chance to gain insight into different kinds of organisations:

*'My background is all local authority and I've learned a lot about the emphasis on generating income and how to invest the resources you have. I deal with big local authority budgets so I'm not financially naïve by any means but I've had less first-hand experience of this type of issue. It's been a great opportunity to meet with people from a Foundation background to see how they have to obtain trustee approval to secure funds etc. It's a balance between wanting the best for young people and making sure there's enough money coming in ... I work harder with local funders now as a result. Before I wouldn't necessarily have seen the value – they were a source of money to develop services but now I'm working to have a dialogue about their aims and philosophy, not just sources of cash, but about bringing more resources – wider than money – into an area.'*  
(Statutory partner)

Partners in the Scottish government also talked of the important role PDI plays for them in fulfilling their objectives:

*'It's been a really positive experience and good to take forward the work of the PDI – Scottish Government wants us to be more in partnership with the third sector – that's a recent push from government and the PDI fits really well with that. Even though the PDI has been doing this work for 15 years!'*

(Government funder)

*'We strive to work in this way – with partners, to involve young people – but it's not easy and so the PDI brings a lot of value for us. Particularly in terms of quality and consistency.'*

(Government funder)

## 5.3

### Benefits for policy/practice

Finally, we heard from participants about the changes they had seen to policy and wider practice as a result of PDI. While this was less tangible and harder for participants to say with certainty, they pointed to things such as:

**New partnerships that had developed** – for example, government departments working together more closely:

*'Everyone Has a Story has increased how much the substance misuse and child protection teams work together and we are doing it more now at a strategic level which is different.'*

(Government funder)

PDI was seen as helping to support government teams to consider the implications of the research as well as to think about how their individual team strategies align. Others talked of PDI providing them with an example of the benefit of partnership working which they might use to gather support and drive change locally:

*‘Artificial boundaries created by funding, policy streams, organisations – they just get in the way. I chair the ADP but also adult protection panel and child protection panel and I see how much time you need to put into partnership working but also how valuable it is.’*

(Statutory partner, ADP lead)

**Aligning funding with local need and strategy** – PDI-funded projects are developed in consultation with local strategy *‘which makes sure that projects are central and embedded in the local strategy so priorities are really aligned.’* Some participants also explained that PDI enables them to resource the kind of support that is really needed locally:

*‘We are working with families that are at the point of needing to address substance misuse or we are supporting them towards an alternative care situation. It’s about us saying here’s some intensive work we can do with you – but we couldn’t do this before because a) intensive support is too expensive and b) we didn’t have the skills, experience and multiagency way of working. But we have been able to work with courts to approach family support differently. Now 50% of families stay together which is partly about joined-up funding from ourselves, policy and drug and alcohol services that is channelled to what we know is really needed.’*

(ADP lead)

**Changes to policy/culture** – a member of the steering group described the long-term *'subtle'* impact of PDI, explaining that 15 years ago one needed to work *'hard'* with adult services to *'get them to consider the rights of the child, but now it is recognised widely that you need to look at the rights and needs of a child when working around drug and alcohol issues'* (Independent funder).

**Developing evidence** – over its operation, PDI has accumulated learning and evidence which is used to inform decisions about funding, but which is also a source from which others can draw: *'We have developed a wealth of evidence now across Scotland because the PDI has been going over ten years. This is so important for cash-strapped public funders, particularly in helping us make the case for funding preventative work'* (Statutory partner).

## 6.0

# Challenges encountered

## 6.1

### The current funding context

There are a number of pressures on funding, including for local partners on whom organisations tend to rely for match funding. The steering group has begun to see the impact of this, having to make difficult decisions about where to direct resources:

*‘The funding has really reduced so it’s been hard having to say no more. The biggest change is the context. The steering group has good geographic knowledge and coverage between us and that helps make sure even the very small get a chance.’*

(Steering group member, voluntary organisation)

These funding changes mean that the steering group has had to prioritise getting resources to direct delivery on the ground, sometimes turning down applications for work that may have a long-term, but perhaps less immediate, benefit such as awareness-raising activity.

Participants also spoke of the challenge of combining public and independent funding in terms of the differences in timescale and process. For example, government funding for PDI must be reviewed and secured yearly and – at the time of our case study interviews – had only just been agreed for the upcoming year: *‘we can only fund one year at a time so we’ve just now signed off funding for the PDI next year and it’s end of February ... so it’s much less flexible and can be a slow process’* (Government funder). Some also mentioned that the three-month time frame for decisions on PDI grants was too long in the current, fast-paced policy environment. Whilst it was thought to be an improvement on some funders, a participant wondered if there was a better way to ensure the grant-making didn’t lag behind the context.

## The PDI model – working through ADPs and match funding requirements

*‘The main challenge locally has been not just the lack of funding but that people can’t even plan or tender services at the moment, everything is only 12 months ahead. Therefore the PDI needs to consider how to link with local structures and systems. What should our role be locally with this – is 50% match funding the right level? What should we be saying or doing about the changes in planning structures and cycles?’*

(Independent funder)

Originally PDI worked through ADPs because they had resources to match fund, and the aspiration was to give a PDI grant with the ADP using tapered funding because *‘we thought projects would get picked up by statutory funding at the end. But that isn’t realistic now so we talk instead about how to sustain the learning as a priority’* (Independent funder). Sometimes, the Foundation will choose to build in a process to upskill and develop staff to embed the work – how to think differently. Participants in the case study pointed to changes in local structures that PDI will need to be aware of and respond to. In particular, they spoke of the need to consider whether ADPs are the best partner for the PDI going forward: *‘ADPs may not have the money now so we need to think about whether a different model is required ... it was always assumed before’* (Steering group member). Cuts to ADPs in 2015 changed the operating context for PDI quite seriously, though many said it was not yet clear how this will play out.

*'Local authority and health boards are integrating – most of those are about adult care so it is hard to understand and work out where children and families will sit in local structures. This gets decided locally and sometimes they'll have the ADP on the integrated board but not always, and then we have a lot of brokering to do ... because this work crosscuts it can make it hard sometimes when people are quite siloed.'*

(Independent funder).

The challenge here appears to be multifaceted: the shifts in local context will require more effort to maintain the current approach but also mean that the ADPs are not necessarily the strategic partners that they used to be – and may have less control over how and what drug and alcohol services are funded, as well as fewer resources.

In addition, across the interviews we heard varied experiences of ADPs, with some appearing to operate in a more strategic and engaged way than others. While part of the focus of PDI's work has been to support ADPs to engage appropriately, our findings suggest that this does not necessarily happen across the board: *'they could technically sign anything off just to draw funding into their area but generally they don't, they really work with us and are aligned to our values'* (Independent funder). For some grantees, the ADP was a valuable partner but this was not always the case and high staff turnover in recent years had often removed existing relationships.

Finally, and linked to the above, participants spoke about the challenge of match funding in the current economic environment: *'it is becoming more and more problematic to secure match funding'*. As well as a scarcity of funding opportunities, some found that funding processes became out of sync between PDI and the match funder: *'Eventually when we secured the PDI it was at the end of the match-funding grant's first year. So now we have two more years of the match funding and a gap in the final year of the PDI grant when we won't have a match funder'* (Grantee). We heard of frustration at having to focus considerable energy into securing the match funding when applicants know PDI money is just 'there'.

## 6.3

### Targeting of funding to make best use of resources

To date, PDI has aimed to achieve geographic spread in its grant-making – trying to work in all local authorities. However, the steering group is currently discussing the role place plays going forward: *‘up to now the PDI approach has been to give money to all local authorities in Scotland and to target areas that weren’t funded or were under-funded. We are now having conversations about whether to target towards need and level of engagement – such as the grantees’ willingness to engage in the kinds of relationships we promote and the aims of the programme’* (Government funder). This has been partly borne from realising that PDI was sometimes funding areas that weren’t in real need: *‘we found ourselves giving funding to areas that didn’t actually need it – we decided we shouldn’t do spread for spread’s sake’*.

## 6.4

### Managing and sharing power

With the wide range of partners in PDI and the aim of working together differently, participants described the careful work that has gone into thinking about how to share, and how to make sure one voice doesn’t dominate. This included setting the culture for the programme, a well-chaired steering group, and a strong, clear vision to which all subscribe, which appears to have allowed for open and – importantly – pragmatic conversations:

*‘The steering group is made up of people in the field who work in local authorities or who have had funding from them before. The people are key – good intentions and the Foundation provides the environment for it. Nothing is behind closed doors, it’s transparent and we focus on the decision for a community. There is no opportunity to discount someone due to personal bias because of the culture and values and knowledge ... so I might say the local*

*authority should fund that kind of work but then they are at the meeting and I hear their perspective or about upcoming cuts and we can talk about what is realistic, that's the key.'*

(Steering group member, voluntary organisation)

However, we heard that it is an ongoing challenge to be aware of, more so in light of making difficult decisions with less funding available: *'like befriending services there have been questions about what's the impact – and it is expensive to deliver. But because I'm on the group I can tell them about the difference it makes. Plus, the young people's group provides another voice of real experience, even though they are not necessarily a group affected by those specific issues'* (steering group member, voluntary organisation).

Participants also talked of the importance and challenge of creating a grants process that does not exclude the smallest organisations: *'it's a constant debate – we don't want to just support big organisations who have the capacity to do this reading across and situating their work in context. We don't want to exclude those small organisations so we take the time to consider all applications and everyone on the steering group has always really read and engaged with applications which means we can properly discuss them'* (Steering group member, ADP lead).

## 6.5

### Tensions around maintaining independence

The importance of maintaining independence arose in two ways from the case study findings – at programme level and local level:

Programme level – the steering group explained the need to be quite tough in setting parameters for what PDI will and won't fund: *'It is really hard seeing projects struggling to get support from the local authorities and the challenge of providing what might be seen as a statutory responsibility – this is an ongoing challenge and something that the steering group has taken a strong line on. They've said "no, that is a state responsibility" using the Children and Young*

*People Act but at other times they recognise the need to be pragmatic and understand that social work is stretched to the limits right now'* (Independent funder). The wider structure of PDI – with the ability to commission research or draw out learning across the portfolio to feed up to government appeared to make these tough decisions a little easier since there are other routes by which PDI might advocate for the types of services being lost.

Local level – one participant explained that some local organisations will resist being 'co-opted' into the local authority strategy in order to remain a voice of opposition and wondered if this raised a question about the degree to which local voluntary organisations are truly able to influence local agendas and strategy:

*'The other challenge is that some organisations will be very vocal about wanting to remain independent of the local authority's plans – they can be quite resistant as they are sometimes in opposition to the local planning and agendas. But the risk here is that they then become isolated and not sustainable financially.'*

(Statutory partner)

## 6.6

### Exit and sustainability

Finally, PDI is able to fund for three years initially with an extension of two 'years' tapered continuation funding. Whilst it was understood by grantees and voluntary sector partners that PDI could not fund in perpetuity, some wondered if there was more it could do to *'help us think about what next'*. For example: *'Partly it's about them always being mindful that you don't know what you don't know and there is a lot of unpredictability but it does need to be on the radar much earlier. [Name of PDI and Strategic Support Manager] has helped us by passing on details of potential match funders but maybe there's other things as part of your planning or workshops that could help – drawing us all together to reflect at the end of a year and review how to move forward'* (Grantee).

The emphasis of PDI is on helping funded projects think beyond funding as a sustainable plan, but also to consider how the legacy or learning from funded work has a longer-term impact at a local level. For example: one project was funded through PDI with match funding from the local authority. There was a commitment of two years' support to help embed an approach across services to look at how to offer support and advice to parents with substance issues and help them engage with family support models for their children.

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