

How to Stretch Resources in Local Government

Transcript

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00:00:13.630 --> 00:00:20.140

Cori Zarek: Hello, everyone! Welcome to our event today called How to Stretch Resources in Local Government.

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Cori Zarek: My name is Corey Zarek, I'm the Vice President of North America here at Apolitical, and we are eager to hear from all of you who are joining us from around the world. Do post in the chat where you're joining us from, the organization you work for, and we are looking forward to getting to know you all. We'll get started in just a minute.

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00:00:48.070 --> 00:00:59.390

Cori Zarek: All right, we're all just waking up. Looking forward to seeing where you're joining us from. Please do post your, geography and affiliation in the chat when you get a minute.

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00:01:02.780 --> 00:01:11.389

Cori Zarek: All right. Alberta, Canada, that's wonderful. London... Acne, yes, that's fantastic.

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00:01:12.050 --> 00:01:14.189

Cori Zarek: Oh, good, some ELGL folks.

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00:01:15.640 --> 00:01:18.219

Cori Zarek: Yes, I hear it's very soggy in London today.

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00:01:18.370 --> 00:01:19.560

Cori Zarek: New York.

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00:01:19.700 --> 00:01:21.380

Cori Zarek: Ghana, fantastic.

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00:01:26.840 --> 00:01:51.290

Cori Zarek: All right, well, keep it coming. We, will be eager to hear from all of you, where you're joining us from. Go ahead and drop that in the chat as you get signed in and settled, and we will get started. Today, we are exploring how local government organizations are continuing to deliver essential services under pressure, finding creative ways to adapt, optimize resources, and work more closely with their communities.

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00:01:51.290 --> 00:02:04.569

Cori Zarek: You will hear from public servants across different levels of local government, who will share practical strategies, success stories, and lessons from the front line. For those of you who may be joining us for the first time, welcome!

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00:02:04.570 --> 00:02:28.650

Cori Zarek: APolitical is the world's largest network of public servants, with a mission to make governments smarter. We're used by half a million public servants and policymakers across nearly 170 countries, providing governments with the tools, skills, and networks they need to become more effective and tech-enabled organizations. AP Political is a strategic partner to governments, helping them prepare their workforces for the future.

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00:02:28.760 --> 00:02:44.199

Cori Zarek: We achieve this by upskilling the government workforce through short online courses focused on government priorities, enabling public servants to find and share best practices through peer communities, and building innovative tools designed for and with governments.

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00:02:45.430 --> 00:02:50.510

Cori Zarek: see some more folks joining us from Canada, Eugene, Oregon, Michigan...

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00:02:50.870 --> 00:02:57.580

Cori Zarek: UK, UK, that's great. Alright, well, keep introducing yourselves as you get signed in, let us know where you're joining us from.

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00:02:57.840 --> 00:03:21.229

Cori Zarek: And before we get started, I also wanted to introduce you to the local government community on Apolitical. Our online communities are spaces to ask questions. We don't always get time for at work. You know, whenever you're trying to solve a problem, the first thing you want to do is find someone who's already solved it. Our communities are the place to ask. You will find best practices for managing team budgets... team budgets.

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00:03:21.230 --> 00:03:27.719

Cori Zarek: morale, community engagement, all the things that you are working on in your local government community.

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00:03:27.840 --> 00:03:48.830

Cori Zarek: So, please do, join the local gov community and find your peers. There is someone with a version of your job, in many places around the world, and let's all be friends. My colleagues, will have posted the link in the chat, so do, pop in and join that community if you're not already part of it.

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00:03:49.120 --> 00:03:58.760

Cori Zarek: So, today's event is recorded for on-demand viewing on the apolitical website. No need to record it yourself. If you have any,

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00:03:58.980 --> 00:04:10.690

Cori Zarek: interest in learning more about our privacy concerns, those are in the political homepage footer. Closed captions are available, and you can toggle those on or off in your, screen settings.

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00:04:11.110 --> 00:04:25.729

Cori Zarek: Okay. Before we introduce our speakers and really get going, we're gonna run a couple of quick polls to get a sense of where you're joining us from in today's discussion. So, first poll. To what extent do you agree with the following

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00:04:26.110 --> 00:04:36.440

Cori Zarek: statement. Learning from other local authorities is important for improving our work. Tell us, on that scale, how do you agree with that statement? Strongly.

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00:04:37.280 --> 00:04:39.049

Cori Zarek: Mostly. Neither.

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00:04:41.930 --> 00:04:53.900

Cori Zarek: Looks like we are in pretty, pretty decently strong agreement that it is important, to learn from other local authorities to improve our work. Agreed. Great. Super.

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00:04:54.530 --> 00:04:56.700

Cori Zarek: Next question.

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00:04:58.320 --> 00:05:06.440

Cori Zarek: Despite current pressures, what is the one thing your team is doing well? Staying responsive to your community?

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00:05:06.720 --> 00:05:12.089

Cori Zarek: Streamlining processes, making smart use of data, keeping morale up.

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00:05:12.460 --> 00:05:15.979

Cori Zarek: Triage and prioritization. That last one's ruthless.

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00:05:22.730 --> 00:05:24.789

Cori Zarek: How do you choose your favorite child?

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00:05:27.950 --> 00:05:34.720

Cori Zarek: Okay, looks like... Staying responsive to the community really is hitting with a lot of us.

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00:05:35.530 --> 00:05:38.640

Cori Zarek: And streamlining processes right up there as well.

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00:05:41.660 --> 00:05:42.900

Cori Zarek: Okay.

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00:05:43.300 --> 00:05:44.160

Cori Zarek: Super.

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00:05:45.810 --> 00:05:59.099

Cori Zarek: So we want to stay responsive to our community, that will be a big theme today, and I love that we've got a lot of process, folks. Just the key to my heart as well. Great. Well, thank you, thank you.

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00:05:59.400 --> 00:06:02.210

Cori Zarek: Well, next, let me,

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00:06:02.690 --> 00:06:27.399

Cori Zarek: turn to our incredible speakers. We have 3 brilliant guests joining us today, Sean, Dennis, and Matt, and let me introduce them all in turn. Sean Rogers leads Calderdale Council's partnership with the voluntary sector, driving their inclusive economy strategy, strategic community-led regeneration programs, and their approach to tackling the cost of living. Oof. No, no light lift

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00:06:27.400 --> 00:06:36.900

Cori Zarek: there. Sean is a passionate advocate for the power of communities, and is proud to be a board member of Locality, helping amplify that work nationally. Welcome, Sean.

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00:06:37.580 --> 00:06:38.849

Sian Rogers: Nice to see everybody.

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00:06:39.320 --> 00:07:04.280

Cori Zarek: Dennis Nazoranko, apologies, is the CIO Advisor at Kyiv City Council. He works at the intersection of digital resilience, public sector strategy, and international cooperation. As the CIO Advisor at the Kyiv City Council, Dennis focuses on building practical digital services

that continue to operate under pressure, and strengthening systems that residents can trust when reliability matters

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00:07:04.280 --> 00:07:06.420

Cori Zarek: most. Dennis, welcome.

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00:07:07.110 --> 00:07:08.310

Denys Nazarenko: Hello, everybody.

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00:07:09.270 --> 00:07:30.089

Cori Zarek: And then Matt Horn. He's serving in the first year of his term on the board of directors for an organization called Engaging Local Government Leaders, ELGL. See some ELGL folks in the chat. It's a volunteer-run, membership-based nonprofit organization in the United States with a mission to engage the brightest minds in local government. Matt is

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00:07:30.090 --> 00:07:54.279

Cori Zarek: Currently the Director of Strategic Growth for MRB Group, a placemaking and local government services firm supporting communities in infrastructure, design, economic development, and planning. He has served in senior local government leadership roles across the U.S. in a few different municipalities. I'm sure we'll hear more examples from Matt in the cities he's worked in as well. And you can read the full bios of all

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Cori Zarek: of our speakers by visiting the resources tab at the bottom of your Zoom screen and heading to the Speakers section. Matt, welcome. Lovely to have you and everyone with us today.

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00:08:05.290 --> 00:08:07.409

Matt Horn: Thanks so much, looking forward to the conversation.

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00:08:07.840 --> 00:08:30.649

Cori Zarek: Okay. Well, let's get started. We are gonna kick things off with an icebreaker. You each have just a quick one-line response to share, with the group, and also we'd love to hear

from all of you. This is an icebreaker for everyone. What is the most unexpected place you've found a great idea for local government?

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00:08:30.960 --> 00:08:39.989

Cori Zarek: Alright, Sean, we'll start with you and chat. I hope to hear from you as well. The most unexpected place you found a great idea for local government. Sean, you're up.

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00:08:40.679 --> 00:08:59.149

Sian Rogers: So, I see loads of things happening in our communities, but a lovely one that I picked up recently on Instagram, which I do follow for bits and pieces, and it's surprising, was a food wall, which was being developed somewhere in Poland, I think it was in Krakow, and I hope I got that right.

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00:08:59.149 --> 00:09:07.069

Sian Rogers: But it was, like, a community fridge, but more. And, brilliant way of using food waste and, getting that accessible to communities.

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00:09:07.800 --> 00:09:18.030

Cori Zarek: Love that. I actually have one of those pantries on my block here in Washington, D.C. Alright, Dennis, you're up next. What's the most unexpected place you found a great idea for local government?

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Denys Nazarenko: Actually, when I have some time and connectivity, I'm trying to play Call of Duty game, and I was thinking about how the gamification mechanics could be transformed for the engagement of the community members.

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00:09:32.520 --> 00:09:35.160

Denys Nazarenko: Lots of interesting ideas to go with.

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00:09:35.920 --> 00:09:46.579

Cori Zarek: Okay, Call of Duty video gamification for local government. I look forward to hearing how that unfolds. We will watch this space. Alright, Matt, on to you.

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00:09:47.220 --> 00:10:03.659

Matt Horn: So, as a city manager out in the Finger Lakes in New York, we were looking for ways to source innovation from our community, and we created this app called the Civic Innovation Hub, and one of the earliest ideas

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00:10:03.660 --> 00:10:18.700

Matt Horn: to come from the Civic Innovation Hub was from the Finger Lakes Skateboard Club. And the Finger Lakes Skateboard Club wanted to find a way to integrate skating activities into our really great, vibrant downtown, and so they helped to craft

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00:10:18.790 --> 00:10:33.399

Matt Horn: in what they called an action sports ordinance, which, safely introduced skateboarding into downtown. And, you know, 12, 13, 14, 15, 25, 35, 45-year-old skaters collaborating to write municipal code. It was super cool.

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00:10:34.260 --> 00:10:53.680

Cori Zarek: Love that. Okay. Skateboarding, video games, food pantries, all kinds of good stuff. If folks in the room, also have interesting ideas you'd like to share in the chat, we'd love to see them. Anything that strikes you as an unexpected place you found a good idea in local government.

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Cori Zarek: But,

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Cori Zarek: as we... as we wait for any other ideas to roll in, we're gonna get started with prob... we're just gonna go straight into it, you all. First thing we're gonna hit on, as we think about local government is, cost optimization. Money is always tight in government at every level, and probably

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00:11:12.170 --> 00:11:37.130

Cori Zarek: tightest, in local government. You all have to think creatively and work on shoestring budgets, and it is, tough. And so, we're gonna just dive right in and, hit on some of these, important issues around how we, find cost savings or cost optimization. Dennis, I'll start with you. What are some of the strategies that the Kiev

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00:11:37.130 --> 00:11:43.109

Cori Zarek: City Council has adopted that might inspire other cities working under pressure when it comes to saving money.

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00:11:44.160 --> 00:11:56.499

Denys Nazarenko: No, I mean, when you observe the sustained pressure on pressure, it reveals, I think, for any city, that the cost problems are really about the technology.

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00:11:56.820 --> 00:12:00.860

Denys Nazarenko: or even funding, it's probably about the friction.

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Denys Nazarenko: So we've taken a look at three things. One.

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00:12:05.100 --> 00:12:07.840

Denys Nazarenko: To stop funding coordination failure.

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00:12:08.490 --> 00:12:21.729

Denys Nazarenko: And you'll probably be surprised at the amount of time and money that could be spent on people reconciling some broken processes, repeating minutes, delay, etc. So, reducing that friction...

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00:12:21.860 --> 00:12:25.390

Denys Nazarenko: Will free capacity without cutting services.

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00:12:25.700 --> 00:12:32.389

Denys Nazarenko: Second one... You might look at the prioritizing services, not projects.

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00:12:32.610 --> 00:12:39.740

Denys Nazarenko: But when you have tight constraints, then partial delivery is often The most expensive one.

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00:12:40.040 --> 00:12:48.889

Denys Nazarenko: And this is not the outcome you want. So we looked how to protect end-to-end service if people rely on it, and...

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00:12:49.050 --> 00:12:54.260

Denys Nazarenko: Even if that will mean that, oh, some initiative should be put on pause. 5.

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00:12:54.590 --> 00:13:13.379

Denys Nazarenko: The third one, surprisingly, but we designed explicitly for degraded operation. So we assume system might fall, stuff will not appear, and information will be incomplete, and still plan on that. So in practice, resilience

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00:13:13.550 --> 00:13:17.030

Denys Nazarenko: Resilience proved cheaper than recovery.

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00:13:20.400 --> 00:13:22.190

Cori Zarek: Great, thank you so much.

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00:13:22.260 --> 00:13:46.669

Cori Zarek: And Matt, we'll come to you next. You get to see across a lot of, local governments in the United States, working with them in your day job and your side hustle at ELGL. Tell us, how are... give us a few examples of how local governments in the U.S. are collaborating with organizations or NGOs or entities like ELGL

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00:13:46.730 --> 00:13:52.050

Cori Zarek: To deliver services more efficiently, or meet their, meet their citizenry, better.

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00:13:52.440 --> 00:14:09.739

Matt Horn: Yeah, so in my mind, when we talk about efficiency, New York State is where I spent about half of my career in local government, and every square inch of New York State is incorporated. There is a municipality sitting on every square inch.

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00:14:09.740 --> 00:14:19.409

Matt Horn: of New York State, which I wasn't accustomed to coming from the southeastern U.S, where you had vast areas of kind of unincorporated area, right, that were just the county-managed services.

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00:14:19.420 --> 00:14:24.870

Matt Horn: So in New York State, very quickly, you can see a duplication of services, town to town.

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00:14:24.870 --> 00:14:43.280

Matt Horn: every town. Two towns five feet from each other. Each has an assessor, each has a code enforcement officer, each has a water department. And so there was all this duplication of services that was happening. So, as our resources started to constrain really quickly, the idea of shared services became

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Matt Horn: almost an only way out, for two reasons. One, the cost to sustain many, many, many, finance departments and assessors and water departments, et cetera, was never going to work over the long run.

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Matt Horn: And so, from a cost perspective, it just didn't make sense. And then, too, from a workforce perspective, right? So, in the Northeast, there's some population decrease happening. In the Northeastern U.S, some population decrease. And so, finding qualified staff.

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00:15:14.430 --> 00:15:30.220

Matt Horn: for each one of these little towns became more and more and more difficult. So, right away, we started looking at opportunities to collaborate. Our very next-door neighbor, we share parks, and we share, public safety and those kinds of things.

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00:15:30.220 --> 00:15:40.000

Matt Horn: And then, in communities that might not be next door, but that we had a shared mission or a shared set of responsibilities, we did share things like

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00:15:40.000 --> 00:15:45.289

Matt Horn: IT staff, right? We've got two communities, both of them have similar systems.

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Matt Horn: If we could hire 2 or 3 people to run both, then that works really well, and we saw that with IT and property assessment.

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Matt Horn: The second approach that I think is starting to take off, but that I started working inside of probably 20 years ago, is this fractional approach, right? The idea that we don't necessarily need a full-time

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00:16:11.730 --> 00:16:24.680

Matt Horn: executive for every single department. We're a small community, we're a shrinking community, we need kind of on-demand access to this expertise, but to have that person sitting there 40 or 60 hours a week

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00:16:24.720 --> 00:16:42.880

Matt Horn: is costly. And so, through nonprofits, I've worked closely with nonprofits who can provide fractional local government management support, or the private sector, which has been doing this really well for decades, the idea that, hey, this week you're going to be the CFO in

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00:16:42.980 --> 00:17:01.299

Matt Horn: pig's knuckle, and next week you're going to be the CFO in Winchester, and the third week you're going to be the CFO over here. And that tends to work really well, so we can still provide a high value for taxpayer investment, but, without, without carrying, kind of, unused capacity place to place.

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00:17:02.610 --> 00:17:06.759

Cori Zarek: really creative. Also, is Pig's Knuckle a real place?

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00:17:07.230 --> 00:17:20.380

Cori Zarek: No follow-ups. Alright, Sean, we'll come to you next. Can you share with us an example of an initiative that has, helped stay responsive... helped you stay responsive to community needs on a tight budget?

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00:17:20.880 --> 00:17:27.480

Sian Rogers: Yeah, I mean, I think I'd like to go back a little bit first to say, I mean, we're talking to a global audience.

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00:17:27.720 --> 00:17:32.520

Sian Rogers: Local government is being delivered, probably the same sort of things are happening everywhere.

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00:17:32.550 --> 00:17:52.070

Sian Rogers: But the organization, how it's organised, is probably very different in different places. I know there's a number of local government colleagues in the UK on the call, and I don't think that we're particularly doing something which is different than lots of other councils in the UK, but I suppose a bit of context, really, is that

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00:17:52.150 --> 00:18:12.090

Sian Rogers: over the last, sort of, 10, 15 years, we have had a real, kind of, period of austerity in local government in the UK, and I know that's also the case from speaking to colleagues before this call, in other places as well, and I was recently on a call across Europe where it was, you know, that's true there across a lot of European countries as well.

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00:18:12.110 --> 00:18:25.410

Sian Rogers: And I guess there are choices, Matt was talking about choices, and I think, digital is clearly one huge part of transformation of local government to make sure that things retain... continue to be responsive, but another way

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00:18:25.510 --> 00:18:34.129

Sian Rogers: And I think getting the blend between the two is important. The other way is to work more closely with and alongside communities, and thinking about...

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00:18:34.230 --> 00:18:50.909

Sian Rogers: delivering the right type of service at the right level for that community, and with that community. So some things clearly can be done at scale and at a regional level. We've got a lot of local government reorganization going on across the UK, which is being led by the national government.

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00:18:50.910 --> 00:19:10.380

Sian Rogers: Looking at some of the things that I think Matt was talking about, you know, have we got the right structures in place, and lots of quite controversial mergers of district councils and county councils, and trying to sort some of that through. That's long-term stuff that needs to be sorted out in the United Kingdom, and I'm guessing elsewhere.

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00:19:10.690 --> 00:19:21.839

Sian Rogers: But then there's a lot of stuff going on in the UK around regional devolution, so devolving powers to the region and creating regions, which we've not had a particularly strong regional government in the United Kingdom.

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00:19:22.160 --> 00:19:32.569

Sian Rogers: to date, some places really good, like Manchester. People will be aware of Manchester, as a place, and the greater Manchester area, which is a long experience of regional government.

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00:19:32.580 --> 00:19:43.169

Sian Rogers: But then, at local government level, we've... I think a lot of councils, including our own, have thought quite carefully, increasingly, about what we put... what we do from a placemaking

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00:19:43.190 --> 00:19:50.310

Sian Rogers: community-led approaches, in our communities. And I think that's really important context for what we then do.

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00:19:50.310 --> 00:20:08.959

Sian Rogers: So personally, my team, me and my team are doing lots of work and loads of projects, but the starting point is around how do we get alongside our communities and think differently about how we work with those communities? What are their aspirations? What will make their... the outcomes of that community better?

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00:20:08.970 --> 00:20:16.799

Sian Rogers: And in a context where we have less money, really thinking hard about how we do that differently with communities, what are their priorities, and how do we

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00:20:16.940 --> 00:20:18.739

Sian Rogers: Change the way we work.

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00:20:19.160 --> 00:20:21.880

Sian Rogers: And I'm really interested in your thing about frac...

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00:20:21.940 --> 00:20:36.069

Sian Rogers: fraction... I don't know, you call it fractional allocation? Gosh, that was a... that's the new term for me, but thinking differently about how we work with communities to deliver things. So, we work with partnerships around our cost of living programs.

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00:20:36.090 --> 00:20:50.160

Sian Rogers: We're working in partnership to deliver regeneration programs. We're just mobilising a huge program, which is massive in the UK at the moment, called Pride in Place, which I think tells its own story. It's about local people

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00:20:50.270 --> 00:21:07.219

Sian Rogers: wanting to have pride in their places, and that is a government agenda... you know, it's a government agenda, but it's a local council agenda. We want our people to have pride in their communities and in their places, and take a lead role in that. And we are enablers, we're not the doers, we're not the people who should be saying what those aspirations should be.

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00:21:07.220 --> 00:21:14.450

Sian Rogers: So, I think that's the starting point for you, but we might get into finer examples as we go through the conversation.

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00:21:15.930 --> 00:21:18.289

Cori Zarek: Super, thank you.

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00:21:18.540 --> 00:21:26.259

Cori Zarek: Okay, just, you know, digging in a little bit further, Dennis, I'm gonna come back to you, thinking about,

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00:21:26.400 --> 00:21:42.650

Cori Zarek: budget constraints, how does that change the shape of the local government workforce, and how are you seeing that actually impact what, you know, kind of what your, public service, public sector employee situation is looking like in Kyiv?

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00:21:44.480 --> 00:21:49.309

Denys Nazarenko: I mean, I think, like, two-fold. So, constrained...

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00:21:49.900 --> 00:21:53.609

Denys Nazarenko: Could be helpful, if it helps to really...

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00:21:54.020 --> 00:22:11.179

Denys Nazarenko: to really push the clarity about priorities. When it hurts, if you come with the, oh, I now have multiple reporting, I need to get extra approval, and then it pushes you into sort of defensive behavior, like, give me a break, just don't touch me.

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00:22:11.530 --> 00:22:16.339

Denys Nazarenko: So, what changed for us, was not the size of the team.

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00:22:16.500 --> 00:22:19.110

Denys Nazarenko: But what we actually ask people to do.

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00:22:19.360 --> 00:22:29.759

Denys Nazarenko: So we empower them, I'll say in the UK context, more to protect outcomes. So that means, let's,

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00:22:29.890 --> 00:22:36.069

Denys Nazarenko: See how we could make sure that there are fewer manual approvals and the clear escalation rules.

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00:22:37.600 --> 00:22:52.469

Denys Nazarenko: And this is why I just want to give... remind all the participants from the local governments, your role is very important, and your star professional judgment could be really used when it matters most.

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00:22:52.980 --> 00:23:03.199

Denys Nazarenko: Now, that shift is not something you do overnight, but in the long run, it reduces burnout, because people are not accountable for problems.

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00:23:03.260 --> 00:23:14.019

Denys Nazarenko: they have no authority to resolve. So it's one part. Second one, which I'm joking, I'll be the most hated person in a local government

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00:23:14.040 --> 00:23:28.419

Denys Nazarenko: area this year. I really want to come up with a model for the course management of the municipal services. We should then... could really answer the question. Maybe we are understaffed, maybe we are...

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00:23:28.460 --> 00:23:37.799

Denys Nazarenko: under-budgeted, maybe we could help with the technology, or maybe that's a question about the responsibility. So, let's see what we could do together.

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00:23:38.060 --> 00:23:39.610

Denys Nazarenko: Hold up.

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00:23:40.590 --> 00:23:53.639

Cori Zarek: Interesting, yeah. Your model might inform the fractional approach that Matt was talking about, right? And if you maybe only need a CFO half the time. Yeah, very interesting. Matt, let's come back to you.

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00:23:54.310 --> 00:24:08.559

Cori Zarek: Do you have an example in, you know, any of the cities you've worked with where budget pressures have led to creative problem solving that's led to kind of a long-term improvement in how the government is able to deliver services?

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00:24:08.700 --> 00:24:11.640

Cori Zarek: Sort of, you know, kind of forced into it.

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00:24:12.090 --> 00:24:26.590

Matt Horn: Yeah, well, I think, you know, the impacts, from my perspective, are, are clear in two ways. One, there becomes this race for talent, right? So, we,

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00:24:26.590 --> 00:24:38.349

Matt Horn: when constraints happen, there are fewer and fewer people to perform the kind of services that we're looking for. People opt out, people move on to other jobs, or go... go into...

133

00:24:38.600 --> 00:24:49.479

Matt Horn: the private sector. They get out of public service, and so these municipalities end up having to choose from fewer and fewer and fewer workers, which means the cost escalates.

134

00:24:49.480 --> 00:25:09.299

Matt Horn: those folks know they're in demand. And then second, I'm so jealous of the horsepower on this panel, because the other two speakers have provided some really neat insights into these issues, and Dennis was just nailing something, which is.

135

00:25:09.540 --> 00:25:14.460

Matt Horn: The way we build our organizations,

136

00:25:14.610 --> 00:25:26.300

Matt Horn: it sometimes creates a disincentive to be creative. To be creative, to do something different outside of the box, means I have to jump through a bunch of hoops.

137

00:25:26.370 --> 00:25:40.269

Matt Horn: And, and that just compresses morale, right? Just... just... just people get, you know, it's the great race to the middle or race to the bottom, like, I'll just do what I gotta do, I'll come in, and then I'll... I'll clock out and go home. And so we end up with

138

00:25:40.270 --> 00:25:47.380

Matt Horn: with, less talent. So, or, you know, less experienced talent, less enthusiastic talent, morale is down, service is down.

139

00:25:47.490 --> 00:26:01.359

Matt Horn: So, in a couple of communities, I think one of the coolest, approaches I've seen in this is kind of back to that, you know, sourcing ideas. How do we source ideas

140

00:26:01.370 --> 00:26:12.709

Matt Horn: from the workforce about, about the work that they're performing, right? And so, employ... you know, empowering employees, empowering

141

00:26:12.710 --> 00:26:21.969

Matt Horn: your teams to create new opportunities for service delivery around what Dennis said that had me scribbling.

142

00:26:22.020 --> 00:26:32.029

Matt Horn: outcomes. How do we do this around outcomes? And I think the coolest tool out there to support this is priority-based budgeting.

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00:26:32.030 --> 00:26:45.759

Matt Horn: And so, if anybody's not familiar with priority-based budgeting, it's... it's kind of the eradication of the line item. You know, how much you're spending on staples, or post-it notes, or other office supplies.

144

00:26:45.760 --> 00:27:05.269

Matt Horn: is not important. What's important is what is the resident getting for that? What's the taxpayer, the stakeholder getting for that? And so, in communities that are deploying priority-based budgeting, some of the really neat ways it's happening is we're not saying, tell us how much money you need, department head.

145

00:27:05.300 --> 00:27:17.239

Matt Horn: We're saying, what do you want to accomplish next year? How are you going to do that? And how are you going to build your budget around delivering that most effectively? And then.

146

00:27:17.630 --> 00:27:36.349

Matt Horn: giving them ultimate authority to move money around inside of those programs, so long as the outcome is achieved, right? And so, we measure not by, well, you're 65% of your line item. Who cares? What is that? Why does that matter? What matters is, did the resident get what you said they were going to get?

147

00:27:36.440 --> 00:27:50.579

Matt Horn: And I think to everyone's point so far, that's... that helps you focus. Constraint should help you focus, it should help you prioritize, and so it also unshackles you from what I call the political footballs.

148

00:27:50.920 --> 00:28:09.580

Matt Horn: Why are we doing this? Because we did it last year. Well, why'd we do it then? Because we did it the year before that. And people just carry these footballs with them year to year, and priority-based budgeting dumps all of that out and lets people kind of start from, what are we trying to do next year? What are we trying to do in the future? Sorry, I'm pointing at my camera, that's got to be jarring.

149

00:28:09.810 --> 00:28:15.800

Matt Horn: But anyway, that priority-based budgeting, I think, is a real cool tool to focus the workforce and let them be creative.

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00:28:16.070 --> 00:28:28.189

Cori Zarek: Super. I think more jarring is making a football reference in a global audience. That's something very different. We would never touch it, with our hands. Okay. Well, thank you, Matt, and thanks. That's,

151

00:28:28.290 --> 00:28:53.169

Cori Zarek: that was a new concept for me, priority-based budgeting. I hope that we will see some activity either in the chat or in the local gov community, tapping into more, examples of priority-based budgeting, if that's something... something that's happening where you are, or if that's something you're interested in. I would love to learn more. Alright, I'm gonna switch us into, tapping into the communities

152

00:28:53.170 --> 00:29:03.300

Cori Zarek: themselves, right? And local government... local government is the closest we can possibly get to the communities, to the humans who we all, live with and among.

153

00:29:03.410 --> 00:29:23.130

Cori Zarek: And it's a really interesting and kind of different role of local government to be, engaged with the community, empower the community, channel the community. You all have

raised some of these themes already. Sean, I'll come to you. How is Calderdale supporting community-led ownership as part of its regeneration strategy? Something you're working on, I know.

154

00:29:23.940 --> 00:29:30.630

Sian Rogers: Yeah, so, we've worked on what people call community asset transfers, or community management of assets.

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00:29:30.920 --> 00:29:46.530

Sian Rogers: in Calderdale for quite a long time. Again, there'll be lots of other local authorities and places across the world, I'm sure, that have done similar, but we've had a community management of assets policy framework for about 10 years, a bit longer, and...

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00:29:46.720 --> 00:29:50.669

Sian Rogers: I think that came out of a kind of a background of...

157

00:29:50.700 --> 00:30:05.309

Sian Rogers: misused, I mean, assets that we no longer used, just being sold on the open market. We were named and chained as a local authority. I can... I can say that in a... in a... in a conversation at, a discussion, the Houses of Parliament.

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00:30:05.310 --> 00:30:10.830

Sian Rogers: As a place where we had... we had put a building on the market, and it ended up by being squatted, and the...

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00:30:10.830 --> 00:30:19.729

Sian Rogers: the site of a protest many years ago. Many years ago, about 20, you know, in about 20... 2009, and that provoked a real response. It's like, this is ridiculous.

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00:30:19.730 --> 00:30:27.239

Sian Rogers: There is... there's clearly got to be better discussions about what do local communities want for their places, and what for their assets.

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00:30:27.300 --> 00:30:31.800

Sian Rogers: And it is an asset-based approach. It's saying, what can we,

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00:30:32.280 --> 00:30:47.880

Sian Rogers: do differently with communities, which is the kind of theme, I suppose, I'm talking about. And, since then, since about 2012, we've transferred a number of significant assets that we've no longer needed as a local authority to deliver services.

163

00:30:48.070 --> 00:30:59.359

Sian Rogers: to community organisations. And we've been through quite a lot of cycles of that, and we've had asset transfers, that have been really successful, and some that have been much more of a struggle.

164

00:30:59.360 --> 00:31:13.019

Sian Rogers: We're kind of very open-eyed about that. We've had some also significant ones which have become so challenging, we've had to take them back. And I think part of what I would say about it is that this is not a done thing. It's not something that you get right in one go, is it?

165

00:31:13.070 --> 00:31:31.319

Sian Rogers: we have an aspiration to try and do that in a more systematic, proactive way when there are significant, important local assets which local people have identified as being important to them, and to open up that process, when an asset is no longer needed. But also.

166

00:31:31.920 --> 00:31:48.330

Sian Rogers: to be open to have those conversations when a local community organization has a powerful idea about how an asset can be used more proactively, positively, deliver better outcomes. And I think, sorry, over the last 10 years, we've transferred a number of assets. They've ranged from

167

00:31:48.640 --> 00:31:52.199

Sian Rogers: Swimming pool, a cinema.

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00:31:52.560 --> 00:31:57.670

Sian Rogers: A number of community buildings, sports, centres, halls.

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00:31:57.790 --> 00:32:10.680

Sian Rogers: Yeah, real range, allotment sites, green spaces, all sorts of things. And I'd say the most successful have acted... become real catalysts for the regeneration of those places.

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00:32:11.280 --> 00:32:18.979

Sian Rogers: They've become places which are hosting business incubation sites, they are centres for, kind of, cultural events.

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00:32:18.980 --> 00:32:34.150

Sian Rogers: They, in the description pre the session, I talked about Calderdale being a place which has had a lot of flooding, and in flood events, we've had some significant flood events here in Calderdale, and also through COVID, they've become places where people have come together.

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00:32:34.290 --> 00:32:38.019

Sian Rogers: And tackled things as a community, so...

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00:32:38.100 --> 00:32:57.930

Sian Rogers: that has enabled that kind of community-led approach, that, you know, using the resources of the place to make sure that we both deliver better services, you know, tackling loneliness, etc, but also really a place to kind of activate, a community response during difficult times, and create new things, businesses, etc, for the longer term. So.

174

00:32:58.330 --> 00:33:08.989

Sian Rogers: they can be absolutely catalytic, and I... just saying to my role as... on the locality board, that is something that we've really championed nationally as well. So, I mean, I do think it's...

175

00:33:09.630 --> 00:33:24.050

Sian Rogers: it doesn't come without its challenges, it's a difficult thing, it takes resources, but I'd say the investment of the resources does bring a whole heap of, kind of, outcomes. We talked a lot about outcomes that otherwise we would not have seen, and we wouldn't be able to deliver as public servants.

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00:33:24.980 --> 00:33:32.740

Cori Zarek: That's great, and it sounds like an important outcome is just really getting the community invested and kind of having that ownership and buy-in of spaces.

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00:33:32.740 --> 00:33:38.350

Sian Rogers: Yeah, the other... yeah, the wider kind of outcomes around civic engagement are just huge, so...

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00:33:38.350 --> 00:33:54.199

Cori Zarek: Yeah, that's fantastic. Dennis, tell us about, in Kyiv, how are... how are you all engaging citizens in local decision-making and empowering your, communities to take a more active role in shaping government and government services?

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00:33:54.690 --> 00:34:00.569

Denys Nazarenko: I mean, we have, in a word of Sean, deliberately put it.

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00:34:00.620 --> 00:34:08.089

Denys Nazarenko: You know, our digital strategy for the next 10 years, that every citizen should own the city.

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00:34:08.139 --> 00:34:20.929

Denys Nazarenko: But it's not necessarily about the physical assets, but are they be able to make an impact. So we have various, tools, coming from the participatory budgeting and voting and polling, so...

182

00:34:20.960 --> 00:34:29.249

Denys Nazarenko: Give you an example, if you publish some, idea of the local initiative, and it gets 7,000

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00:34:29.530 --> 00:34:40.379

Denys Nazarenko: votes with an additional signature within 3 weeks, it is then submitted to the Kyiv City Council for consideration. But, I would say this is, like, a technical part of that.

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00:34:40.540 --> 00:34:49.349

Denys Nazarenko: On a more practical one, what we focus on is expectation management as a practical discipline. And again.

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00:34:49.570 --> 00:34:56.280

Denys Nazarenko: three parts for that. One, we're trying to make service... services visible, And...

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00:34:58.040 --> 00:35:07.939

Denys Nazarenko: If it is degraded or temporarily unavailable, we're talking about that. I remember my first visit to London in 2007, I was really impressed.

187

00:35:08.210 --> 00:35:12.570

Denys Nazarenko: When you're in London, the ground, you see time when the next trail will

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00:35:12.980 --> 00:35:16.289

Denys Nazarenko: arrive, because in Kyiv we had, oh yeah, it has left

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00:35:16.590 --> 00:35:24.100

Denys Nazarenko: the platform 10 minutes ago, so what? I don't understand that. And we figure out that people are really forgiving

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00:35:24.670 --> 00:35:30.629

Denys Nazarenko: Of reduced service, rather than unexplained silence, so... Make it, maybe, make it...

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00:35:30.850 --> 00:35:45.370

Denys Nazarenko: later, but really stick to your promises. Second one was about the trade-offs. So again, transparency for me is not about the data we publish, it's rather explaining why the service

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00:35:45.540 --> 00:35:55.589

Denys Nazarenko: is protected while another is, slows down, and I think that comes probably practically with something Matt could address, but...

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00:35:55.850 --> 00:35:57.950

Denys Nazarenko: Let's say pothole repair.

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00:35:58.010 --> 00:36:17.979

Denys Nazarenko: Oh, why it counted it down? It's a small one. Why it's done within 2 days? Well, maybe you need to align with the plans of other agencies, and maybe there are some other dependencies. So, instead of just being silent, and yeah, in 3 weeks it's done, and everybody's furious, you just explain. This explains within some,

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00:36:18.150 --> 00:36:29.270

Denys Nazarenko: model. And the third one, we really close the feedback loops. So, we're knowledge input, and then we show what change, and we're honest when

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00:36:29.350 --> 00:36:38.580

Denys Nazarenko: nothing could not... could be changed, and why? So, I would say unanswered feedback is much worse than negative feedback, because

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00:36:38.740 --> 00:36:48.850

Denys Nazarenko: You still keep connection with the, residents. And we have this, like, a... by, two-way roads, so...

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00:36:49.130 --> 00:36:55.519

Denys Nazarenko: Residents know that the data we share through our CDF comes from the government, that they could

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00:36:56.160 --> 00:36:59.659

Denys Nazarenko: Rely on that, and they could provide feedback to us.

200

00:37:00.290 --> 00:37:01.070

Denys Nazarenko: work better.

201

00:37:03.140 --> 00:37:15.580

Cori Zarek: Thanks, Dennis. Couldn't agree with you more. Feedback loops are so critical. It's just such a driver for participation to kind of know that you aren't just shouting into the void with your contributions.

202

00:37:15.580 --> 00:37:27.309

Cori Zarek: Matt, let's come back to the U.S. What... give us some examples. What are some roles that residents are playing in co-creating or co-delivering services in the U.S. municipalities that you work with?

203

00:37:28.090 --> 00:37:32.129

Matt Horn: Sure. I think the... the... really coolest example.

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00:37:32.520 --> 00:37:41.549

Matt Horn: let you behind the curtain a little bit on this... on this webinar. We met a couple of weeks ago, and... and we're batting some of these questions around, and...

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00:37:41.550 --> 00:38:04.369

Matt Horn: Sean used the phrase community-led, and started talking about, you know, how residents were, were so engaged. And I would say it's the... the benefit of going... of going first is, you can set the tone, but Sean went first in that conversation, and I was like, man, that's a great answer. I can't give the same answer, but it...

206

00:38:04.370 --> 00:38:08.699

Matt Horn: But I think it really is true, right? We are closest to the people.

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00:38:09.390 --> 00:38:28.679

Matt Horn: so let's leverage that. Let's leverage that, right? And so, I was thinking about my own experience as a manager, and one of the things that we were passionate about was access. How do people access local government leadership? How do people access services?

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00:38:28.710 --> 00:38:32.779

Matt Horn: And what we heard from community residents was, A,

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00:38:33.120 --> 00:38:44.240

Matt Horn: City Hall's open when I'm at work, right? City Hall's open 8.30 to 4.30, Monday through Friday, and and so I can't... and they're... and...

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00:38:44.350 --> 00:38:49.439

Matt Horn: in some cases, in the worst cases, they're closed at lunch, right? Some silliness like that. So...

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00:38:49.480 --> 00:39:01.880

Matt Horn: A, you're not always accessible, even by hours, but B, it can be a little bit intimidating, right, to walk into one of these big municipal buildings, a police department, a fire station, a city hall.

212

00:39:01.880 --> 00:39:14.050

Matt Horn: And now, you know, where do I go? And so, about halfway through my tenure in New York, we created this program called the Office of Neighborhood Initiatives.

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00:39:14.070 --> 00:39:26.919

Matt Horn: And what we wanted that to be was, like, the front door to municipal government for residents. You don't have to guess. You don't have to go to City Hall and hope it's open and hope that somebody can get you to the office that you're looking for.

214

00:39:26.920 --> 00:39:34.190

Matt Horn: It was a Main Street storefront, for lack of a better way of saying that. We took that department completely out of City Hall.

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00:39:34.190 --> 00:39:52.680

Matt Horn: and put it right on Main Street in a storefront that was fully accessible, physically, that was open on hours off from City Hall, so it may stay open in the evenings a couple of days a week. It was open until 7 or 8 at night. It was open one Saturday a month.

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00:39:52.850 --> 00:39:56.349

Matt Horn: And we rotated department heads and published that, so...

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00:39:56.370 --> 00:40:15.339

Matt Horn: This Saturday, the city manager's gonna be there. Next Saturday, the code enforcement officer's gonna be there. And so you could look out a couple of weeks and say, man, I'd really like to talk to the code enforcement officer about this or that, and you could go and sit with them on a Saturday morning, have a cup of coffee, and engage in that dialogue.

218

00:40:15.340 --> 00:40:30.579

Matt Horn: That's a, you know, a relatively modest threshold. When we were dealing with projects, like, we were engaging in a big downtown revitalization effort, and we created what I... what I think we termed, like, a...

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00:40:30.580 --> 00:40:40.560

Matt Horn: a running charrette. And so, we established a... again, a storefront, a vacant storefront in downtown, which was going under... unutilized.

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00:40:40.600 --> 00:40:56.140

Matt Horn: And put the planning team, the project team, in there for published office hours, so that residents who wanted to help shape that downtown revitalization project could stop in and talk to a planner or an engineer and say, here's how I envision this thing going.

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00:40:56.170 --> 00:41:10.380

Matt Horn: And then just the last example I'll give is, in a community that was a bit more urban and a bit more resourced, the city council wanted a 24-7 human being portal.

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00:41:10.380 --> 00:41:27.269

Matt Horn: into municipal government. So they launched a call center, a city call center. And the really funny story was, they got rid of all of their phone numbers. The city... a city of 100,000 people, an organization with a \$100 million budget.

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00:41:27.270 --> 00:41:44.100

Matt Horn: Had two phone numbers. In the U.S, you'll know this is 911. That was one. When your house is on fire, dial 911, and the fire trucks will come. And then the other number was a local number that you just dialed, and the person who answered the phone knew everything you needed to know.

224

00:41:44.210 --> 00:41:59.339

Matt Horn: And, to Dennis' point, if the call you are making is because there's a pothole, we now have a trap. We enter a ticket when you call, and we give you an estimated time for repair, and if you are interested.

225

00:41:59.450 --> 00:42:02.489

Matt Horn: We will call you back and tell you when it's been repaired.

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00:42:02.620 --> 00:42:21.829

Matt Horn: And that was... that service ran 24-7, 365, so if you needed access, even if it was just to leave a message, like, if you have a tax question, we're not going to be able to answer your tax question at midnight on Friday night, but we will make sure, we will open a ticket, that ticket will show up in the tax office.

227

00:42:21.940 --> 00:42:31.589

Matt Horn: And that tax person will be on the clock for how long it takes to call you back. So, responsiveness... Dennis, I think you nailed it. People...

228

00:42:31.710 --> 00:42:38.450

Matt Horn: People are concerned about the answer, but they're way more concerned about silence, about not knowing, so...

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00:42:40.290 --> 00:43:01.370

Cori Zarek: Thanks, Matt, that's fantastic, and really interesting, right? Love the accountability and just sort of access that example gave. And appreciate very much, both your examples, Matt, and Sean as well, talked about really using the physical space of the city, of the community that you're part of, and, like, leveraging that to your

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00:43:01.370 --> 00:43:03.070

Cori Zarek: advantage.

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00:43:03.360 --> 00:43:27.040

Cori Zarek: Okay, well, y'all, I'm gonna ask one more, like, kind of rapid-fire question for all of you, and then we'll turn to questions from the chat. So, attendees, please remember to ask, Sean, Dennis, and Matt questions in the Q&A tab at the bottom of your screens. And Sean, we'll start with you. Last question from me. What gives you hope right now about the future of local government?

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00:43:27.040 --> 00:43:29.709

Cori Zarek: And then we'll come to Dennis and Matt on the same question.

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00:43:30.500 --> 00:43:44.799

Sian Rogers: Well, every time I go and visit, an organization or a project being delivered in a place, and happening in a place with local people, massively inspired and doing things, I think the world is a much better place than anybody realizes.

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00:43:44.800 --> 00:43:52.810

Sian Rogers: I think there's... there's hundreds of thousands of people doing good things in their communities alongside public servants every day of the week.

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00:43:52.830 --> 00:44:06.360

Sian Rogers: And, oh, and I was sat in one of our community asset transfers, the other buildings the other week, and the hubbub of stuff and conversations going on between people who work for the council and

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00:44:06.360 --> 00:44:18.320

Sian Rogers: Residents about everything from, you know, like, a controversial parking thing right through to, a, an event that people wanted to plan for the spring.

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00:44:18.320 --> 00:44:27.120

Sian Rogers: to people talking about Reiki, you know, and how it could be used as a tool for improving, you know, how people feel. There was so much going on in that space.

238

00:44:27.130 --> 00:44:45.260

Sian Rogers: And yes, there's loads of challenges, and we could think of lots of negative things that are happening on social media, and we have that as well to manage, and I was thinking that's a whole other thread we could be talking about, and how we manage that process, and tackle some of the misinformation, disinformation that's out there about the good things that are happening in our communities.

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00:44:45.260 --> 00:44:47.689

Sian Rogers: With... alongside local phrase, but...

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00:44:47.690 --> 00:44:52.580

Sian Rogers: Actually, the reality is mostly people are getting on with doing good things, litter picking.

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00:44:52.640 --> 00:44:54.440

Sian Rogers: All sorts of things everywhere.

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00:44:55.980 --> 00:44:59.860

Cori Zarek: Thank you. Dennis, you're up next. What gives you hope about local government?

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00:45:02.630 --> 00:45:10.660

Denys Nazarenko: I mean, I've been all... I've always been about people first, so... Local government...

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00:45:11.360 --> 00:45:18.760

Denys Nazarenko: employee still shows up, no matter what. So, and there is, such an untapped...

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00:45:18.960 --> 00:45:24.860

Denys Nazarenko: source of, great ideas, and it's still morality...

246

00:45:25.290 --> 00:45:30.379

Denys Nazarenko: and so much of internal power, so I think we could...

247

00:45:30.510 --> 00:45:49.250

Denys Nazarenko: It's not about what we should do first or second, but rather, okay, we have 500 areas, which one we will choose with the biggest outcome and impact for the community? But still, it's an honor to serve my local community. At least my brain is wide that way.

248

00:45:50.820 --> 00:45:53.039

Cori Zarek: Wonderful. And Matt, how about you?

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00:45:54.020 --> 00:46:10.260

Matt Horn: You know, I, when I was on staff in a local government, I, I would always... I was always nail-biting at, like, public comment time on a city council agenda, and, you know, who knows what egg's gonna drop in this conversation.

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00:46:10.260 --> 00:46:17.059

Matt Horn: But now I attend lots and lots and lots of town council meetings, town board meetings, city council meetings.

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00:46:17.120 --> 00:46:20.670

Matt Horn: And what I... what I'm most heartened about are two things. One.

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00:46:20.750 --> 00:46:40.080

Matt Horn: people keep showing up, right? Residents keep showing up, and they keep voicing their opinions, and they keep bringing issues to the floor, and what that tells me is that they believe someone is going to answer the call, right? They believe that if I show up and I give my opinion, then this council is going to do something with it.

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00:46:40.080 --> 00:46:47.429

Matt Horn: And I want that... I want that mentality and that attitude to persist, because local government is where that happens fastest.

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00:46:47.520 --> 00:46:53.380

Matt Horn: And two, In, you know, in bigger cities, this is different, but in little towns and villages.

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00:46:53.690 --> 00:46:59.320

Matt Horn: These decision makers, these mayors and councils and, and supervisors.

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00:46:59.710 --> 00:47:04.850

Matt Horn: They're basically volunteers. I think the mayor in my hometown makes \$5,500 a year.

257

00:47:05.070 --> 00:47:16.339

Matt Horn: He shows up, he comes... somebody competed for that position, and asked to get thrown into that fray, and he comes to every meeting, and he weighs in, and he does his homework.

258

00:47:16.430 --> 00:47:30.599

Matt Horn: And that... that gives me hope, that people will keep showing up for that. Even when it's an uphill climb, even when there's way more work than resources, somebody is volunteering their time to put... put that work in, so...

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00:47:31.340 --> 00:47:33.209

Matt Horn: As long as that keeps happening, I'll be happy.

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00:47:33.210 --> 00:47:49.729

Cori Zarek: That's such a good point on both sides, right? The community shows up, and also the individuals show up to lead the community and bring them together. Wonderful. Well, we've got a few questions coming in in the Q&A, and encourage you all to keep them coming.

261

00:47:50.140 --> 00:48:06.650

Cori Zarek: So, we'll turn to a question first from Nathan. How are you all using data to help make better decisions? Dennis gave the example of the open data around transit times, but maybe there are other examples of data for decision making that you'd like to share.

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00:48:07.170 --> 00:48:10.069

Cori Zarek: Anyone, feel free to come off mute and jump in.

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00:48:11.100 --> 00:48:28.980

Sian Rogers: start, just because I've been in a meeting this morning when we've absolutely just done this, one of the things that my team does is support our anti-poverty partnership work, and those of you in the UK will probably be familiar with a set of data called the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

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00:48:28.980 --> 00:48:44.059

Sian Rogers: It's something that's published every... I think it's 6 years on average, 4 to 6 years, which is developed by our Office for National Statistics, and it, produces quite complex data sets about poverty and deprivation across a number of domains.

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00:48:44.330 --> 00:48:54.649

Sian Rogers: And it's just been re-updated, this last December 25. And we were looking at that as a partnership, so that's us council officers, but also.

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00:48:54.970 --> 00:48:57.419

Sian Rogers: voluntary community organisations.

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00:48:57.440 --> 00:49:08.810

Sian Rogers: And councillors, others, and using that to identify where our challenges are, where poverty has increased, where it's intensified, and what specific issues are driving that.

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00:49:08.810 --> 00:49:19.820

Sian Rogers: So we use that really methodically to target... to think about, then, how do we reprioritise our work and target, particular, areas, communities, or groups of people.

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00:49:19.820 --> 00:49:27.810

Sian Rogers: So, you know, we actively do that as part of our ongoing planning, but specifically, that's a really good data source that we use.

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00:49:28.190 --> 00:49:31.799

Sian Rogers: And it's nationally available, but really good local data as well.

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00:49:33.910 --> 00:49:34.500

Cori Zarek: Great.

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00:49:34.920 --> 00:49:39.059

Cori Zarek: Dennis or Matt, did you want to jump on in that one? Otherwise, we've got plenty more questions here.

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00:49:39.060 --> 00:49:43.849

Denys Nazarenko: I'll probably give a bounce in that way, that we had one of,

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00:49:44.220 --> 00:49:47.199

Denys Nazarenko: Processes where the resident needs to approach

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00:49:47.450 --> 00:50:00.160

Denys Nazarenko: different departments within city council, then it's, like, dependable, or I get an answer from Department A, then I move to Department B, etc. So, we've discovered that and been able to

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00:50:00.500 --> 00:50:08.029

Denys Nazarenko: really re-engineered it to have the end-to-end process. But the, key point for us was,

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00:50:08.930 --> 00:50:23.729

Denys Nazarenko: That showed us that we could really use data for the data-informed decisions, which not necessarily means data-led decision, because, like, those are not the same

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00:50:23.940 --> 00:50:30.719

Denys Nazarenko: Not the same things, and... Probably to s...

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00:50:31.110 --> 00:50:35.810

Denys Nazarenko: things that a lot of Koreans had done 20 years ago, 30 years ago.

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00:50:36.010 --> 00:50:45.239

Denys Nazarenko: 5 years ago, the same today. You just come up with the large numbers, and then you look, okay, this is... this is something which either time-wise, or the...

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00:50:45.350 --> 00:50:51.200

Denys Nazarenko: Personal-wise, or the volume-wise, take the biggest chunk, and you just...

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00:50:51.330 --> 00:51:00.710

Denys Nazarenko: Make a really dive into that, and see what piece of data you have, or either they might be missing, so how you could just elaborate on that.

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00:51:03.530 --> 00:51:25.480

Cori Zarek: Great, thank you. Sean, we've had a couple questions related to, community asset transfer, so I wanted to maybe go, like, let's dive deep on that topic with you for just a quick sec. There was a question in the chat about, just the amount of bureaucracy involved, like, it sounds like that's a heavy lift, and so maybe you could say a bit more about that, and if you've found ways to kind of hack that bureaucracy.

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00:51:25.480 --> 00:51:27.520

Sian Rogers: And then also.

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00:51:27.520 --> 00:51:29.439

Cori Zarek: just,

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00:51:29.590 --> 00:51:38.729

Cori Zarek: is there pressure to achieve commercial rents? You know, are these spaces that just would be difficult to generate rent from? Like, how do you, you know.

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00:51:38.730 --> 00:51:39.130

Sian Rogers: you manage.

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00:51:39.130 --> 00:51:45.039

Cori Zarek: the sort of reconciliation around should we be making money off of these assets question?

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00:51:45.320 --> 00:51:51.199

Sian Rogers: Yeah, yeah, so all of those feel very relevant, and I clocked the, questions.

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00:51:51.690 --> 00:52:07.829

Sian Rogers: start with, it's bureaucratic. Yes, I mean, I think, let's accept it, local government can be quite bureaucratic. We're dealing with, complicated decisions, with, a lot of money, or the value of resources is quite high.

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00:52:07.830 --> 00:52:15.400

Sian Rogers: And there is a culture, let's be honest, around mistrust of working with communities.

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00:52:15.470 --> 00:52:17.729

Sian Rogers: So, you're working in that context.

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00:52:17.870 --> 00:52:23.370

Sian Rogers: I think that over the last 10 years, we have made our processes better.

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00:52:23.690 --> 00:52:41.219

Sian Rogers: We've... we've kind of... I mean, I did constant review, and we've reviewed our asset management policy fairly recently, but I would also say that if you want a... if a group of people want to take on a manager building, they need to be able to demonstrate that they can do that in a way which is...

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00:52:41.410 --> 00:52:42.960

Sian Rogers: safe.

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00:52:43.360 --> 00:52:57.890

Sian Rogers: and has some sort of, kind of decent business plan behind it. What we've done, and I don't think you can kind of get away from that, what we've done, though, is put a lot of, effort into making that,

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00:52:58.140 --> 00:53:17.140

Sian Rogers: a process that's supported. So, if there is genuine interest in a... in taking on a building and managing a building, we walk through that process with... with... with communities. So, we... we do invest in support for community organisations that's not delivered by us, so it's... it's objective from us.

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00:53:17.300 --> 00:53:32.020

Sian Rogers: And we work with them really closely to make sure that that meets our criteria, so that people go in with their eyes open, and I think that's a really big part of it. You know, this

should be about partnership, it should be about no surprises, it's an op... you know, it's that. So.

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00:53:32.240 --> 00:53:45.569

Sian Rogers: So, fundamentally, yes, if it's a big, significant thing, which is high risk, like, let's say, a swimming pool, or a cinema, or a, you know, a building which people are going to be coming in and using, there will be bureaucracy around that, managing that well, demonstrating that.

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00:53:45.790 --> 00:53:48.610

Sian Rogers: If it's something like an allotment or a small field.

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00:53:48.720 --> 00:53:56.380

Sian Rogers: Much less so. So we do have a proportionate level of expectation, from the communities that take that on. So.

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00:53:56.610 --> 00:53:59.919

Sian Rogers: That's a whole conversation, could go on and on about that, but I'd say...

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00:54:00.000 --> 00:54:19.920

Sian Rogers: those are the big things we've done. There is some bureaucracy, but I think it's about how you manage that, which is the key thing. The other bit about the commercial rents, again, very live conversation. I think it really depends on where you're... where you're based. A lot of our assets, honestly, are they going to make a market rate?

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00:54:20.170 --> 00:54:37.049

Sian Rogers: for rent, I think that's an honest conversation we need to have in our communities. Sometimes they can be of much more value and generate loads more value in terms of benefit, social value, community benefit for that community than what they can make as a commercial rate.

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00:54:37.380 --> 00:54:43.659

Sian Rogers: But we do work that through in our process, and we have had some really difficult conversations with our estates team about that.

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00:54:43.660 --> 00:54:57.719

Sian Rogers: But it's a really... again, it's a process which is quite, moderated, and ultimately, we would recommend that for... to a balanced view through to, local leaders, councillors, elected officials.

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00:54:57.720 --> 00:55:01.089

Sian Rogers: To make a decision, where that is quite a difficult decision.

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00:55:02.500 --> 00:55:04.500

Sian Rogers: So, it's not simple.

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00:55:04.790 --> 00:55:08.030

Cori Zarek: No, I love that, though, defining value differently, right?

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00:55:08.030 --> 00:55:14.710

Sian Rogers: Yes, and social value, community benefit is a huge thing that we need to be thinking about more in that context.

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00:55:15.010 --> 00:55:15.830

Cori Zarek: That's great.

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00:55:15.870 --> 00:55:40.180

Cori Zarek: Well, this maybe then segues to Anne's answer to the question I wanted to touch on next, which is about trust. You know, trust in government is at historic lows globally. And, you know, our community, as we've talked about, is... and our local government is the thing we see and feel and touch most. How, you know, how in your communities and your governments are you responding to this kind of wave of

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00:55:40.180 --> 00:55:45.570

Cori Zarek: mistrust and distrust in our governments and institutions. Matt, maybe I'll start with you.

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00:55:48.810 --> 00:56:03.279

Matt Horn: So, you know, I think this is something that's been around forever, but it's been particularly brewing, I feel like, since, since the pandemic, right? Since around 2020, 2021.

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00:56:03.470 --> 00:56:18.049

Matt Horn: one of the things that happened was local governments made this shift to putting as much of their meetings, as much of their dialogue online as possible. So people who never would have gone to a city council meeting.

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00:56:18.050 --> 00:56:34.540

Matt Horn: or to a town board meeting, all of a sudden, they don't have to get up. They can just click on Zoom and they're in, right? And so, what that did was very quickly expose them to all of the inner workings of what was going on at the local level, whereas

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00:56:34.540 --> 00:56:41.469

Matt Horn: Before, they would have seen it through a filter in a newspaper, or heard it from a friend, or saw it on social media, but,

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00:56:41.470 --> 00:56:58.230

Matt Horn: What I took, or what I... my initial take is, that's awesome. I want to do more of that. And the really great local governments have continued to do that since then. Never hung that up and continue to broadcast it. But what I think local governments are really dealing with

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00:56:58.250 --> 00:57:13.629

Matt Horn: in the U.S. is a kind of a whiplash from the national level. There's a ton of dialogue at the national level about how government can't be trusted. The other guys, we're good, but the other guys aren't good, and so they can't be trusted.

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00:57:13.630 --> 00:57:27.719

Matt Horn: And you can't get to the federal politician. It's very difficult to go express your concern to your congressperson, or the governor, or anyone in the executive branch, so you kind of take it out on local government, right? You take it out.

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00:57:27.720 --> 00:57:39.400

Matt Horn: The, you know, this is a little just an echo of a previous answer I gave, but I think the pathway to building trust is transparency and access.

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00:57:39.500 --> 00:57:57.669

Matt Horn: And so, what I'm watching a lot of local leadership do are a lot more opportunities for committees and work groups come in, help us solve this problem, help us think through it, so that you develop a sense of ownership around the solution that's harder to, you know, yell about.

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00:57:57.670 --> 00:58:00.310

Matt Horn: People still yell, but it's harder.

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00:58:00.310 --> 00:58:14.300

Matt Horn: the, you know, the mayor in my hometown, I don't know how... he runs another... I don't know how he runs his other business, because he is having coffee with anyone who wants to have coffee with him, just sitting in a coffee shop. Yep, tell me what you got, tell me what you got, tell me what you got.

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00:58:14.300 --> 00:58:21.529

Matt Horn: And then just continuing to... actually, one of the really cool initiatives that he's put in place recently was

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00:58:21.680 --> 00:58:28.030

Matt Horn: this effort to slow down a conversation. So they've prohibited things like...

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00:58:28.230 --> 00:58:48.199

Matt Horn: surprise resolutions that just show up on a city council agenda that, if they did get on the agenda in time, the agenda got put out two days before the meeting, so the resident

didn't have time to react to it. That breeds mistrust, right? And so what this mayor did was say, if you bring it to me today, it can't go on an agenda.

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00:58:48.240 --> 00:59:07.470

Matt Horn: with... inside of 30 days. We're gonna take 30 days to read it, then we'll discuss it on the floor. And so, if you can improve access, improve transparency, and slow down the conversation, then... then I, you know, I think residents will come back around to... or come around to trusting a little bit more.

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00:59:07.470 --> 00:59:16.939

Cori Zarek: Yeah, that's great. Well, you know, we have lost track of time today, you all, and we're almost out of it. Matt, thank you, and Dennis and Sean as well.

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00:59:16.940 --> 00:59:31.549

Cori Zarek: really a great conversation. So, please join me in giving them all a virtual round of applause, and thanks to all of you for being here with us today. The team's gonna put up a quick poll to ask how you found this event, so please offer us your feedback.

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00:59:31.550 --> 00:59:33.640

Cori Zarek: We welcome it.

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00:59:33.820 --> 00:59:58.580

Cori Zarek: This event was a valuable use of my time. We hope you think it was. And while you're responding to the poll, just a couple more events to put on your radar. Next Tuesday, we have our next edition of the AI Skills Lab on AI for job applications. Later in January, we have a Hacks for Working with Spreadsheets, getting real wonky on that one, Clever Formulas to work faster, how to craft a brilliant briefing note.

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00:59:58.580 --> 01:00:22.570

Cori Zarek: is coming up in early February with insights from brief writers and decision makers who read them. And, a personal plug on another February event, we have 50 states in, 50 innovations in 50 states here in the U.S. that we will be rolling out a new apolitical list of highlights from all around the United States. Matt, I know you'll be excited to see that, and hopefully, folks will join us for that event in February.

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01:00:22.570 --> 01:00:37.910

Cori Zarek: So thank you so much again for being here with us today. We hope you found this a useful event. Again, thanks to our speakers, and we hope to see you at another apolitical event and in our local Gov community very soon. Have a great day, everyone. Goodbye.

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