

**Some Implications of Market-like Models of
Organisation on Public Ethos :
A discussion based upon a case study of local
government in Denmark and Norway**

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Some Implications of Market-like Models of Organisation on Public Ethos

A discussion based upon a case study of local government in Denmark and Norway

Negative Images of market-like models of organisation within the framework of New Public Management (NPM)¹

This article focuses on implications of market-like models of organisation, which are inspired by ideas from NPM. Does buying services for the elderly influence the local democracy negatively as opposed to the local authorities' own production of services? The market-like models in question are the purchaser-provider model and competitive tendering. Units of analysis are two local authorities, one in Denmark and one in Norway.

One criticism of NPM has centred upon the neglect of virtues highly valued in the traditional public sector, such as fairness, equity, justice and representation (Nolan, ed., 2001). Christensen and Lægreid, for instance are focusing upon the hindrances that these modern forms of organising public service lay on the role of politicians in the decision-making-process (Christensen and Lægreid, 1999). The same authors state elsewhere that NPM in the Norwegian context have moved the focus away from, among other things, the rule of law and political control, and that it has been more concentrated upon the delivery of service to people (Christensen and Lægreid 1997: 376). In a recent study on NPM-reforms on ministerial level in Norway, one of Christensen and Lægreid's major conclusions is that these reforms weaken political governability (2002:216). Another who criticises NPM, or more exactly the purchaser-provider-model, asks: "*...is municipal government being compelled to*

¹ The concept NPM stands for New Public Management. I use the concept according to Greve (2001); as an abbreviation of marketisation and the use of methods of organisation and leadership from the private sector of the economy.

adopt a culture which is alien to its ideological and legal character?"

(Riberdahl quoted in Batley and Stoker, 1991:217).

Ormsby (1998) follows the same path in his discussion when he states that much criticism against the purchaser-provider-model in international literature point to the models' neglect of public ethics. Batley (ibid, 217) claim that the British reforms, during the Thatcher-period, were concerned with depoliticising the control of services and increasing the role of managers, users and the private sector. In studies of local government reforms in Scandinavia the message has often been that there is a conflict between NPM-ideas and a traditional view of councillors as representatives of the citizens, advocating peoples' interest, defining needs, setting priorities and controlling implementation (Kleven et al. 2000).

Councillors themselves, according to these studies, repeatedly state that they feel they have lost control over policy implementation in the local authority. They also often feel that policy formulation and evaluation to a large extent are in the hands of the professional administration.

To be fair, there are also voices heard in this debate that are not predominantly negative about politicians' possibilities to influence decision making. Fimreite and Stenvoll (1999:161) for instance, argue that competitive tendering can strengthen local democracy by returning to politicians the control of standards. Hagen (1997) and Jacobsen (1997:207) argue along the same lines. However, these scholars build first of all upon theoretical considerations, not on empirical data.

I shall contribute to the discussion by focusing on local authorities, with data from a study I conducted some years ago in two Scandinavian local authorities (Tufte 2000).

What I will do, is to question whether the negative images of NPM which I have referred to, comply with empirical data at local government level. I have two objectives with this article. First, I want to shed light upon what is happening with politicians' possibilities of exerting

influence under these new principles of organisation. Do the NPM principles imply less political influence over services, which are offered by local authorities (as many scholars claim)? Second, I want to explore whether or not these principles of organisation imply inattention to public ethics. The underlying assumption of my interpretations is that organisational structure has a great impact on the way politicians can develop public services.

My discussion uses a theoretical framework that builds upon what is commonly known as core-virtues connected to the public sector. These virtues will mainly be defined according to the content given to the concept "public ethos" by Lundquist (1997), with an addition of some virtues, which are supposed to be fundamental to the Nordic welfare-state model.

The principles of organisation that I have in mind are competitive tendering combined with a purchaser-provider-model in the field of welfare for elderly people on local government level. Both local authorities I studied had engaged private for-profit firms to handle major parts of the care of elderly people. The Danish local authority I studied used a firm as agent for their home service for elderly persons, while the Norwegian local authority used a firm to run one of their nursery homes.

I shall start with a brief presentation of the public-ethos-concept as it is applied here.

The public ethos

In this article I draw mainly on the concept "the public ethos" as it is conceptualised by Lennart Lundquist in his book published in 1997. Though the concept was developed with reference to the public sector in Sweden, the concept applies as well to, for instance, the American or the Australian version as the difference is more a matter of language than of content. For my part I claim that the concept, that I outline here, express common and shared virtues for the public sector in all western liberal

democracies. In addition, I shall incorporate some values or virtues, as I prefer to call them here, which are commonly seen as basic parts of the Nordic welfare-state model.

While Lundquist is focusing on bureaucrats' role as guardians of the public ethos, my focus is on local politicians' role as caretakers of the same ethos.

Lundquist divides the concept public ethos in to two parts; virtues connected to democracy on the one side, and economic virtues on the other side. The democratic virtues are about political democracy, the rule of law and public ethics. He points out that these virtues overlap with each other. Economic virtues are about rationality, efficiency and productivity. While the economic virtues are potentially relevant to many sectors of society, the democratic virtues are valid solely for the public sector.

My analysis will first and foremost be connected with the democratic virtues because these are the ones that distinguish the public sector from the rest of society.

I have elaborated Lundquist's concept of democracy somewhat, but I follow the central elements in his definition. The following three elements are all essentially linked to the concept of democracy:

1) "Political democracy" means that:

- the local authorities are headed by representatives of the local constituency, who are
- elected by open, periodic and free elections,
- the representatives have possibilities to influence on vital issues under the jurisdiction of the local authorities, and
- the right to vote on local elections are granted to most of the adult population in the local authorities.

In my discussion later I shall focus on the politicians' potentials to exert vital influence on the service delivery for elderly persons. This is in accordance with one of my main questions mentioned in the first part of

this article: What is happening with politicians' possibilities of exerting influence under specific NPM-like principles of organisation?

The next two elements that I link to the concept of democracy serve as a point of departure to my discussion regarding to what extent NPM-like principles of organisation imply a threat to public ethos virtues like "the rule of law" and "public ethics"? This is the second question that I ask in this article.

2) "The rule of law" means among other things:

- public services offered by the local authority are distributed to the civic according to openly known rules,
- equal cases are to be dealt with equally,
- the individual citizen has the right to see the documents interfering the matters in which he is involved,
- the individual citizen has the right to appeal against decisions in individual cases, and
- the public (e.g. the media) has access to most of the documents in the archives of the local authority.

3) "Public ethics" means that:

- the local authority treats all citizens in the same way,
- justly, impartially and
- the employees are not allowed to take bribes.
- the public services are for everybody, independent of income and place of living (the principle of universality).

I would like to stress that it is virtues and not realities that I am speaking of. This is important to have in mind because local authorities often fail to meet the standards set by these virtues.

Before I give the reader a representative selection of data from my two case studies, a few words about the purchaser-provider model will be presented.

What is the difference between a purchaser-provider way of organising public services in contrast to a traditional way of organising these services?

What is the difference between a purchaser-provider model and a traditional model of organising public services? The main difference lies in the name of the former model itself; it means a division between the function of purchasing a specific service and the function of delivering this service. In a traditional model the same agent broadly speaking, handles these functions, whereas in the former the roles of purchaser and provider are separated. An illustration can perhaps render a clearer impression of what this means:

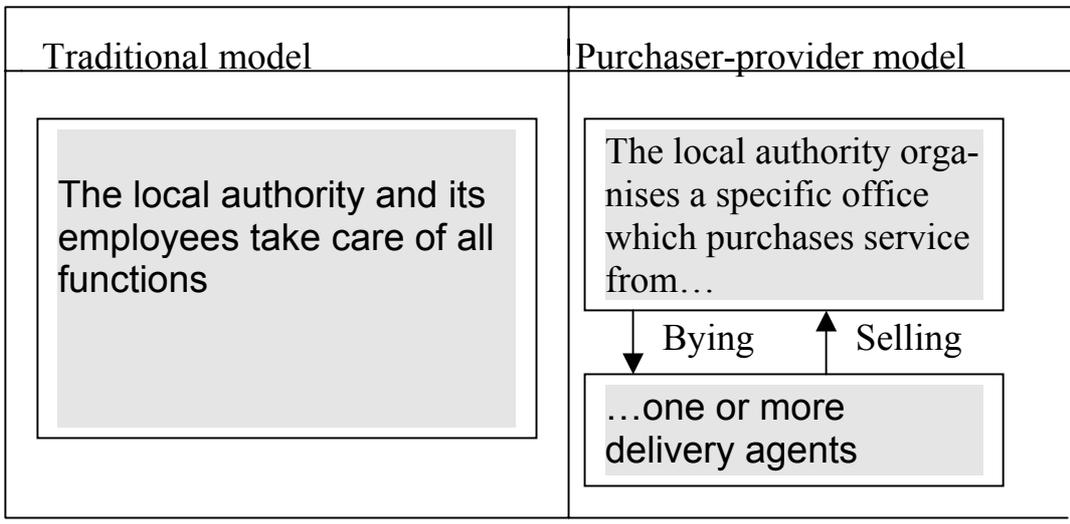


Fig. 1 A traditional model versus a purchaser-provider model¹

Take the example a service for elderly people in a municipality, which is in focus in my own study. Traditionally, at least in the Nordic countries, all necessary equipment as well as nurses, clerks etc are in the hands of the municipality, whereas the service delivery and all it implies are taken care of by an agent of its own in the other model. This agent can be a private firm or an autonomous municipal unit. Often this model is combined with competitive tendering, which means that private firms and

¹ Other models also exist. For my purpose I choose to compare only two models.

autonomous local authorities compete over the terms of service delivery. This was the situation in the two local authorities, which I have studied.

What did they do?

I shall give a characterisation of the rules the two local authorities developed in order to allocate their service for elderly people. These rules are supposed to be essential implications of the organisational reforms that are presented above.

First, one has to have in mind a few basic facts about the local authorities involved in the study. A liberal-conservative majority in the city council headed both local authorities by the time I studied them. The decision to implement a purchaser provider model in combination with competitive tendering was made under firm opposition by the left-wing minority parties in the city councils of both local authorities. The two local authorities have approximately the same numbers of inhabitants, more precisely between 20 000 and 26 000 inhabitants. They are both situated at about one hours' drive from their national capitals (Copenhagen/Oslo). The professional composition of their citizens differs very much. While the Danish commune is more like a village in a rural area, where tourism plays a vital part, the Norwegian commune is an old industrial town.

As one can see from this description, these two cases have a lot of similarities. In addition to these similarities I have taken for granted that the legal boundaries connected to the municipal level on the field of care for elderly people are quite the same in the two countries. These common features taken together makes it unlikely that other differences have had a major influence on the design of the organisation structure, not to say how it works.

First of all it is interesting to experience how the two local authorities have chosen an organisational anatomy, which is quite similar to each

other. They both have established a purchaser-unit with the following main tasks:

a) With regard to individuals:

-Specifying the help needed by the elderly applicants. -The handling of applicants.

-The handling of complaints from elderly.

b) With regard to providers:

-Specifying quality standards, which the provider shall meet. -Specifying the tender conditions.

-The following up of contracts with providers.

The two local authorities differ with regard to what field of care for elderly people they have reorganised. The local authorities both in Denmark and in Norway are legally responsible for their elderly citizens, except care in hospitals. This means that the commune's responsibilities cover a wide range of services. We can simplify this by making two categories of the services; 1) Nursing institutions for elderly people, and 2) care for the elderly living in a home. While the Danish local authority reformed the care for the elderly living in a home, the Norwegian local authority reformed the care for the elderly who live in a nursing institution. Nevertheless, a common feature is never the less present also here. Both local authorities have developed in minute details the contents of the service, which is to be offered.

Take for instance the specification of tasks that are to be observed in the private home of an elderly person who shall be given service. The Danish local authority is using a scheme that consists of no less than 55 items describing what is to be done in his home.

When I asked the leader of the political committee how the councillors were involved with the development of these schemes, she said:

"Of course it is the administrative staff who prepare a written suggestion of how it should look like, but we, the politicians, work it through (...). We look through every thing in order to decide which level of service we want. That means how often it shall be cleaned and how many square meters shall be cleaned (...). We spend a lot of time on this. For the time being we are working on a contract that says how the food shall be, how it shall be made, if it shall be hot when delivered, what it shall contain and from where it shall be brought.(...). I think we can say that, by using competitive tendering, we have given the politicians more responsibility" (p 73/74).

Even the head of the opposition group in the committee, a representative of the Social Democrats, was in no doubt as to who were the real decision makers. She said:

"We decide. It is a really good co-operation between the administrative staff and us politicians. We scrutinise everything and deliver our inputs. Take for instance a small thing like firewood. Perhaps it is only 15-20 persons who need help to collect firewood from outside the house. It is of utmost importance of those dependants of this help, even though it is a very small issue in the overall service. Such details we have to write down in the contract" (p. 74).

To exemplify the level of details with regard to the provider, I will mention that the Norwegian local authority uses 20 full pages to describe the tender conditions. Among these are the following specifications of various physical handicaps belonging to the clients that the provider has to accept:

"-20% can walk.

-80% cannot walk without help/use a wheel chair. -20% can walk to the bathroom.

-80% is in need of assistance to go to the bathroom. -50% must be fed.

-40% must use a lift.

-100% need assistance for medication.

-100% need assistance when going out."

In the Norwegian local authority I asked the chairman of the political committee dealing with these specifications, about the councillors' role in the development of these criteria. As a member of the Progress party, she was very enthusiastic about competitive tendering. She said:

"The local authority had never before diagnosed patients with regard to such criteria, but it was us, the politicians, who took the final decisions as to what the specifications finally should be. "

Somewhat unexpectedly, a member of the extreme left party (Rød Valgallianse) in the committee, who was firmly hostile to competitive tendering, had same positive evaluation of how it worked. He said:

"We (i. e.: the councillors in the committee) have co-operated in the development of these (specifications)(...) This is something we agree upon, across party lines, is a good thing.(...) It has been very useful for us politicians to work with these specifications. "

The leader of the biggest opposition party in the committee, a representative of the Labour party, didn't quite agree with the two former members. He said:

"We should have used a lot more time on this, and drilled more in depth (...). Obviously we politicians have a certain influence on this matter, but here in our municipality (Moss) we have too many

superficial politicians. (...) I miss a discussion about the conditions, is it possible at all to implement this within the limits of the budget for instance?"

I choose to use these selections from my interviews as descriptions of how the councillors had been working with the specifications. In spite of some differences, the main impression is that the councillors worked seriously with the specification of which criteria the administrative or professional personnel should use when deciding which persons should receive the care they applied for.

Through these selections from my report I have tried to give the reader a representative image of my data. I suppose one can easily imagine that a lot of time has been spent on developing these criteria in the two local authorities, and every time a new client applies for one of the services in question the staff need time to consider the application with regard to these criteria. It is not surprisingly, therefore, that none of the local authorities, according to my information, has so far been able to downsize their staff (Tufte p. 54).

Some effects of what they did with regard to public ethos

Let me open out with a few descriptions of effects, as I was informed about them through interviews and documents. First I will give some illustrations of effects that reflect elements from "the rule of law" and "public ethics". I quote from an interview with the leader of the committee dealing with dissatisfied clients in the Danish local government. He said:

"The fact that the home service for elderly people have been taken care of by a private firm, has improved the possibilities of complaining. Nobody needs to fear that a complaint will influence the person who

actually does the job in their home, because the service is a commodity we purchase" (p. 68).

This was also in accordance with an evaluation report by an independent consultancy firm. It had this to say, among other things (about the Danish local government):

"The elderly people who receive home service have got an improved opportunity to complain, and to complain to a body independent of the provider firm" (p. 68).

This evaluation report has also a positive remark about an effect of the establishment of a purchaser-office:

"The construction of a purchaser-office and the accompanying visit calls in the homes of the elderly imply that the service delivered to the elderly have been more identical than what was the case before" (p. 66).

Also in the Norwegian local government the same picture is clearly present. An administrative leader of one of the geographically organized services for elderly said:

"An institution for handling complaints from dissatisfied clients is established which is far better than before. Those who are dissatisfied do not any longer have to direct their complaint to the person who deliver the service" (p. 43).

The following excerpt from an interview with a top-level administrative leader underlines this:

"(Earlier) elderly people very reluctantly complained about the service. Elderly people often saw complaining as a direct insult of the

person who took care of them. It is a significant improvement of equal handling of equal cases and of impartiality" (p. 45).

Now, let us look at some indications with regard to "political democracy". Most of the politicians I interviewed expressed positive experiences with regard to their possibilities to influence on vital issues. Look for instance at what the representative of the extreme left (Rød Valgallianse), perhaps the party most strongly opposed to competitive tendering, said about this:

"We have been working with the tender documents. This is a kind of pioneer work. Here we have got very specific instructions (...). We have discussed these specifications, and we have been involved in the formulation of these. Political also, you see, what instructions we should give to the institution that runs the nursing home. I would say that this should have been done anyway, even without an implementation of competitive tendering, because these instructions make it easier to control (...). It has been very useful for us, the politicians, to be that involved in this matter, as we have been when working with the tender documents" (p. 51).

It's fair to say that the leader of the major opposition party in the commune, who also hold a position in the same committee, didn't quite agree with the representative from the far left. He said:

"Of course we know the content of the tender document, but we think it was handled too fast in our commune. The idea of competitive tendering was a new idea for us, and therefore we should have used a lot more time when we dealt with this.(...) Clearly, we politicians have a certain influence on this, but I think we are too superficial in our local authority" (p. 53).

The answer from the latter respondent indicates that politicians have a potential to influence to a greater degree, given that more time had been allocated to their handling of the tendering documents.

In the Danish local authority, both the leader of the committee and the leader of the opposition, were more in agreement. The committee-leader said:

"Clearly, the administration gives us significant help in outlining the tendering documents, but the content of the documents is seriously worked through by us, in order to have it as we want it and in line with what we want to be responsible for (...) We use a lot of time on this".

(p. 73).

The opposition-leader in the committee said:

"We decide. The co-operation between the administration and us is very good. We scrutinise all the time, and deliver our own input" (p. 74).

The impression I got from these interviews, which I have attempted to give a representative sample of above, is that the politicians still influence vital matters with regard to the quantity and quality of the service offered in this field of care for elderly people.

Discussion

In the section that follows, I shall deal with how public ethos virtues like "the rule of law", "public ethics" and "political influence" is handled in the market-like models of organisation that I have described above. First, I take a look at "the rule of law" and "public ethics".

A threat to "the rule of law" and "public ethics"?

Data indicate that the two local authorities have made strong efforts to secure equal treatment of clients.

My data also picture an organisation that is eager to strengthen the clients' possibilities to complain when they are dissatisfied. Traditional bureaucracy has vanished, and a new, "modern" way of governing by contracts has been the result in the services of elderly people in the two local authorities involved. But as I have shown in the preceding section, both local authorities have developed a huge amount of new rules and criteria in order to handle the allocation of services to the elderly. Statements from interviewees' of different political adherence support the impression that this "modern" way of governing implies a considerable amount of bureaucracy when it comes to handling with issues and people. The bureaucratic aspects of the organisations are at least at the same level as they were before the introduction of the purchaser- provider-model. Also worth mentioning is that none of the two local authorities has reduced the number of employees working with care for elderly.

It is interesting to read that also a study referred to by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000) focus on this paradox; they mention a local authority home help service for elderly and disabled people that was split between the authority purchasing the service and the staff providing it, where they discovered that the contract drawn up for the service was 700 pages long (p 7).

Such results (i.e.: more rules) that I found in my material, supports what Peters (1993) hypothesized:

The future of the public services may be in using highly decentralised and privatised modes of provision. Such a mode of production will require, however, much greater attention to means of enforcing accountability, controlling competition, assuring co-ordination, and ensuring that public service are for the public. These are many of the same requirements that provoked the movement away

from the dreaded bureaucracies and toward these presumably debureaucratized means of serving clients (p. 56).

While the old-fashioned bureaucracy vanishes and resurrects in a modernised form, which probably will be a disappointment to advocates of the reform, at the same time a couple of positive developments occur in terms of a strengthening of virtues connected to the public ethos.

First of all because the purchaser-provider model establishes a distance between those who offer the service (i.e.: nursing, washing, cleaning) and those empowered. This distance is not that clear in the traditional model. Because complaints now are directed to a body outside the authority of those who deliver the service, it feels easier for the elderly to complain.

Further, through new and very detailed specifications of the volume and quality of the service that is to be delivered, one has to admit that the position of those who complain have been strengthened. An additional point is that, when competitive tendering is being used, the agent will have an incentive to accept a complaint because the firm wants to remain in business.

This is, by the way, also an argument, which are supported by Rothstein (1994) in a theoretical discussion about what he calls "autonomous citizens". As Rothstein points out, a private provider of public services is more eager, than it would have been as a public enterprise, to listen to complaints, because of fear of losing the contract by the next invitation to tender (p. 234).

Another positive implication is that the possibility of equal treatment of all has been strengthened. This is because the service-contracts, which are devices connected to the new model, give very specified details of what services are to be offered to each elderly person according to his condition of health. Sometimes, when private firms are established in markets that earlier were public monopolies, it happens that unwanted distributive effects are the result (Ringstad: 380). This is because down

payments are introduced, which puts equal treatment of people in jeopardy. No such thing occurred in the two cases studied.

Equal treatment of individuals and the right to appeal against service and decisions, as stated earlier, are among the fundamental conditions to public ethos. It is surprising, therefore, that the reforms do not seem to have compelled the two local authorities to adopt a culture that is alien to their ideological and legal character, as some have suggested that such reforms would do (Batley, 1991: 217). What we witness seems to me to be a revitalisation of traditional bureaucratic virtues connected to the rule of law and equal treatment of people. These are virtues closely connected to the public ethos.

Political influence

Now considering political influence as another vital aspect of public ethos, my interpretation of the data indicates that neither has this value been seriously neglected. My point of departure for reaching this conclusion, I must stress, lies in a somewhat different role for the politicians than a traditional one. A traditional role implies that politicians are active representatives of the citizens and a political party. As such they are focused on issues, which now and then can be of rather small importance for the overall citizenry, though of significant importance for groups or an individual. The term "ombud" is often used to describe this role for the politician (Opedal, Stigen, Laudal, 2002:41). The role that I discuss differs also somewhat from the last two decades' ideal for local politicians, where the strategist aspect of the role for the politician has been strongly recommended. This role implies that politicians act as goal-formulating governors, deciding what principles shall act as guide-lines for service-delivery. An important implication of this role is that politicians shall not engage in day-to-day affairs. Such tasks are only for professional people in the administration. My role model for politicians can be put in- between the two models just mentioned. In lack of

established labels I call this role "contract manager". This role implies that politicians have a more distant role in the implementation process and management of services, whilst they are somewhat closer to the strategist ideal. My view is that politicians' potentials to govern have been strengthened. This is contrary to what Christensen and Lægreid, (op. cit.) claim. This strengthening is possible through three different aspects of their role:

- through the role they play in developing contracts vis à vis the competing firms,
- through the role they play in developing contracts about the service between the local government and the individual, elderly people, and
- through the role they play in evaluating the effects of the competitive tendering.

My interpretation based on my own, admittedly limited empirical data, challenges in one respect the overwhelmingly negative impression one gets from reading studies about which effects NPM-inspired reforms have on democratic virtues. I state that some important functions are not so quite in the hands of the professional administration as others say (Montin, 1996).

However, it remains to be learned what will be the implications on public ethos in a longer perspective.

A reflection of epistemology

I shall raise two questions of epistemology. One question is if it is right to conclude that the revitalisation of traditional bureaucratic virtues, which my data indicate, is an implication of the NPM-like models alone.

Some may point to other variables of importance. In Norway, for instance, the government in 1997 decided that all local authorities should implement systems of quality control in the field of health-service. And what Denmark concerns, it is important to have in mind that the government has decided that all local authorities should establish a council to deal with appeals against decisions in individual cases regarding care for the elderly in their homes. It can be argued, therefore, that such government-initiated rules also have contributed to the revitalisation of the traditional bureaucratic virtues. In a broader perspective, however, one can put such government-initiated rules also under the concept New Public Management. If one agrees in this, one can say that this strengthens my interpretation that NPM-like models not necessarily damage traditional bureaucratic virtues. On the contrary, they can be revitalised through such models, in some occasions.

Another question of epistemology concerns why some of my data run contradictory to the often negative pictures one comes across when reading comments from political scientists about NPM-reforms. One can ask why my picture is somewhat different. It might have to do with the level of analysis. My data are gathered from the lowest level of the political system, i.e.: local governments. These are units at a micro-level of the political system. Most empirical studies about NPM-reforms that are done within the framework of the focus of this article (as far as I know) are focused on the macro-level. May be this is why positive aspect like the ones I have discussed, do not become so easily manifest? Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000) admirably admit that this is a reasonably well founded question when they give the following concluding remark in their book: *"To end this book on an appropriate note on self-criticism, one of the major limitations of our approach - and the approaches of many others who have concentrated on big reforms and big ideas - is that we capture very little of this micro- improvement"* (p. 191).

A challenge to further research on the subject, therefore, might be to carry through more studies at this level. One way to start would be to

gather empirical data that more broadly, than what has been done in my study, could shed light on the question of how councillors behave under circumstances like those described here. To my knowledge what is written about this so far in the Nordic countries is mostly about how councillors evaluate and/or what they think about their new role. There is a lack of empirical studies that highlight, on other indications than interview data, how councillors act in the flesh. In order to do this one has to develop research designs that focus less on incumbents' own evaluation of their behaviour and more on different indicators of influence. This means, among other things that the concept political influence has to be dealt with in new ways. To get this kind of data, I think one has to operationalize the behaviour of politicians in new ways. To my mind, the concepts "political influence" and "governability" will be of crucial importance in an effort to do so.

Appendix

Data and methodology

Data consist of two parts: a) Documents dealing with the preparations for- and implementation of - a purchaser- provider-model in combination with competitive tendering in a Danish commune, Græsted-Gilleleje, and a Norwegian commune, Moss.

b) 11 interviews with leading political and administrative personnel in the two local authorities.

The interviews, which lasted between one and two hours, were accomplished with the help of a semi-structured guide. It had two aims. The first aim was to fill out the picture of the reforms, as it had developed through my reading of documents. The second aim was to get an impression of how leading persons, involved in the reform, looked upon the reform. A problem with this approach is of course that it is biased, because only elitist views on the reform have been caught. However, I consider this a minor problem because the interviewees, in spite of quite different views on the reform, have told almost the same story (it is one exception to this). The exceptional case is discussed under the heading "Some effects of what they did with regard to public ethos" in the paper.

From a quantitative point of view, the data are modest. Nevertheless the data give a lot of information about the reforms in question in the two local authorities, and in my opinion enough to represent a modest test of the papers' initial question, where I asked if certain negative pictures of NPM are valid under all circumstances.

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