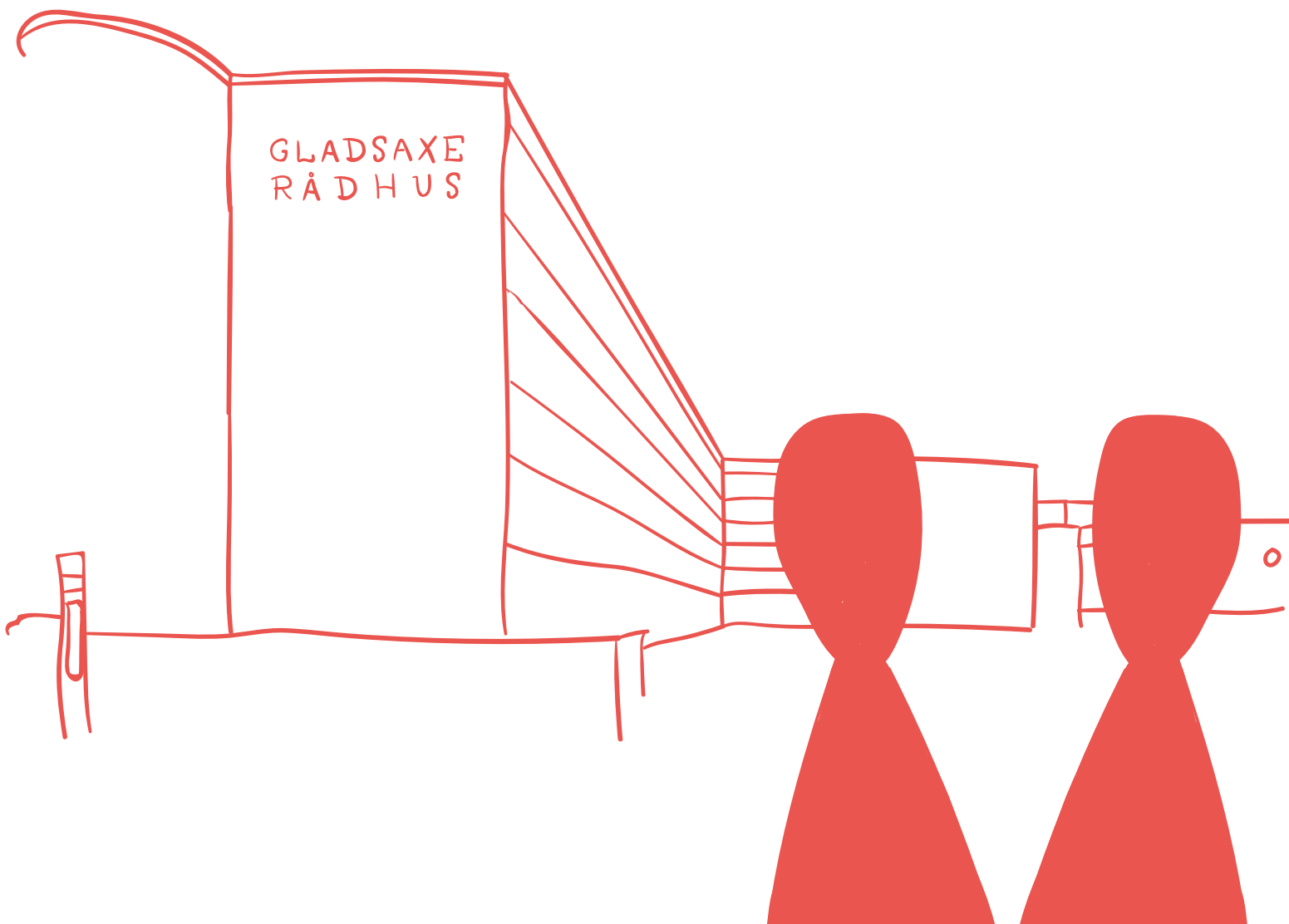


RETHINKING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

SUGGESTIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES IN GLADSAXE

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TITLE PAGE

Title of the report	Rethinking Citizen Participation: Suggestions for Engagement Practices in Gladsaxe	
University	Aalborg University Copenhagen	
Education	Sustainable Design, Msc. in Engineering	
Project	Master thesis	
Project Period	3. February - 4. June 2020	
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Collaborator	Gladsaxe Municipality	
Pages	94	

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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on suggesting a different approach to the current citizen engagement process that Gladsaxe uses. This is a Danish municipality a few kilometers north of the capital Copenhagen. Drawing upon participatory design principles – augmented with insights from urban development and policymaking –, we intend to contribute to an increased dialogue between city planners, politicians and citizens on issues regarding the improvement of the municipality for its inhabitants. This, of course, can contribute to the (social) sustainability aspects that are relevant now and certainly for the future of this municipality. We also believe our contribution outreaches the social aspect of the sustainability. It touches on the all of the aspects of sustainability – environmental, economic and social. That is due, because the engagement of citizens in a bottom-up fashion – argued by this work – tends to create a sprawl of actions that can reach all of the areas via different projects (improving recycling, system against flash floods, thriving businesses, etc).

Initially, we anticipated a close contact with the citizens of Gladsaxe, the planners and workers of the municipality. However, due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, the project had to pivot towards a different approach. The objective then became to research, understand and provide some suggestions on how Gladsaxe sees and performs the citizen engagements within the municipality. As demands, such as the pandemic will tend to become more frequent, municipalities and its inhabitants need to join forces to become more resilient and well-adapted.

Through physical and online interviews with municipality employees in different periods of the semester, we were able to gather an overview of how Gladsaxe perceives itself with regards of citizen engagement as well as how the process usually is performed and practiced, and more importantly, the challenges found by these front-line employees. This initial work provided us with an overview of where the obstacles of citizen engagement in the municipality were and where solutions were most needed.

In the following design stage, we used the literature on urban development and urban policymaking – all under the light of participatory design – to find our area of work, in other words, our niche. From there, another research was performed to understand where and what other municipalities have done successfully which could guide us towards a suggested solution for Gladsaxe's specific issues. Finally, using the cases for inspiration as a guide, we crafted a solution for Gladsaxe which contained different propositions in how to engage different actors, how to maintain them interested throughout the project, and managerial tools to help the coordination of future engagement projects.

Keywords: Citizen engagement, policymaking, urban development, participatory design, sustainability, democracy, municipality, social sustainability, agonism, civil society engagement, social innovation

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout the journey of this thesis, we have been fortunate enough to come across people from different backgrounds who played important roles in the development of this project. They all showed interest, graciously provided their time and knowledge to advance our work despite the global pandemic which happened amidst the work and made us shift gears as well as the project scope. Regardless, we are especially grateful for Jesper Jensen – Project Manager at Gladsaxe Municipality. His welcoming and openness to answer questions during interviews and taking the time searching for colleagues who could talk us proved to be truly valuable and made our project much stronger. Also, we wish to thank all the other Gladsaxe Municipality employees who took time during the COVID-19 quarantine to speak to us online and helping our understanding of their citizen engagement processes in the past, present and future. For that we are very grateful.

We also want to express our gratitude and acknowledgement to Susse Georg – our supervisor. Your words before the physical and online meetings played a major role, and continuously helped us advance our work. Thank you for the important insights during the lock-down period, hearing our concerns while we changed direction of the thesis a few times and giving us the encouragement and support to complete this work.

Lastly, but certainly not least, we wish to thank our fellow students and other supervisors for the enlightening feedback during the milestones.

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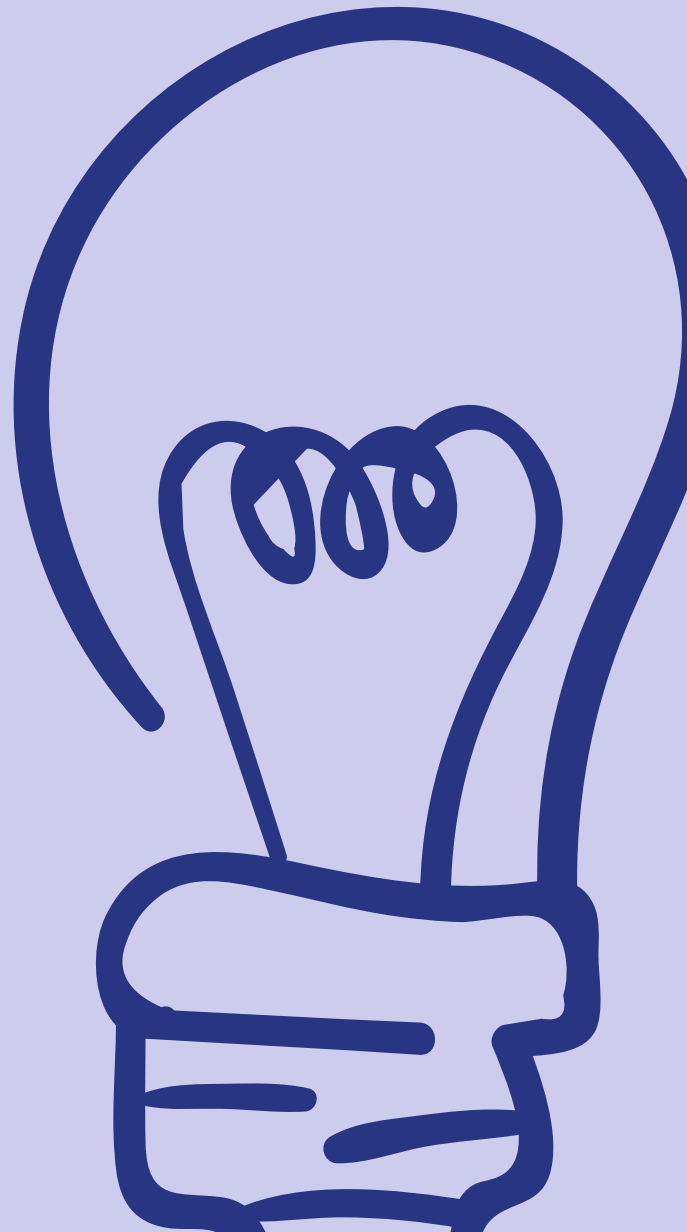
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INTRODUCTION

“So tell us about how do we create the frames internally for us to be able to do a proper engagement process. [...] We are stuck.”

Project Leader



1. INTRODUCTION

Global warming, loss of biodiversity, water and other resource shortages, are highly debated topics worldwide nowadays. However, to solve many of these increasingly global problematics, we, as human beings, need to actively engage in smaller and localized efforts. It is not a matter of how big or small the action is, work should and must be done if we wish to change direction towards a more sustainable living-hood.

Countries, such as Denmark – in which this thesis is written – have specific policies regarding sustainability. For instance, in 2017, together with the UN, Denmark agreed and set goals to achieve the seventeen UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the end of the year 2030 (Voluntary National Review, 2017). These goals include not only environmental aspects but also a plan to address social issues such as inclusion and equality (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark).

In order to achieve such a feat, collaborations are crucial, therefore, the Danish government “emphasizes the need for all actors across society to contribute in achieving the SDGs” (Voluntary National Review, 2017, p. 1). More specifically, the national authority sees municipalities as playing a vital role in the achievement of these sustainability goals. In line with this, the UN stresses that civic engagement is pivotal as it develops resilience, elevates the shared knowledge, and strengthens the responsibility that is needed for a sustainable change (UN Volunteers, 2020).

Fully realizing the sustainable development agenda requires not only making progress equitable and broad-based, but also enabling people to become active participants in that process (UNDP, 2020).

Historically, Denmark has been mindful of citizen engagement since the enactment of the 1970s Plan Act, which formalized the legal guarantee that citizens would have access and engagement in planning processes before approval (Agger et al., 2006). To accommodate the SDGs, the Plan Act further require that all municipalities have a plan of action on how to engage citizens to achieve the goals (Planloven, 2020). The Danish municipalities have taken these issues seriously and focused on approaching and engaging actors where they see that their collaboration is needed and necessary to foster new solutions.

Although, they take these issues seriously, the reality is that the way in which many municipalities are organized today is hindering this progress (Björgvinsson, Ehn and Hillgren, 2012). The obstacles lie within when and how citizens are engaged, and the issues are to be seen in many aspects, both politically and organizationally. The fact is that many municipalities find citizen engagement too costly and cumbersome, and therefore hold many reservations towards using it (Sørensen and Torfing, 2018). These obstacles can

leave both the municipal employees and inhabitants disenchanted, and thereby, hinder the needed collaborations and joint ownership of strategies towards solving our global issues.

The idea of citizen engagement is certainly tough to argue against. Nevertheless, many of the Danish municipalities still struggle and question the processes of engagement and the recognition of when it becomes necessary and how it should be facilitated (Agger et al., 2008 and Voorberg et al., 2015). It is, therefore, paradoxical how municipalities advocate for citizen engagement, yet still are not attentive to when and how it should be done in order to create ownership, acceptance (by the citizens) and growth towards a more sustainable future.

The scope of the thesis is, thus, how sustainable designers could have a vital role in suggesting a different engagement process between the citizens, employees, and politicians of the municipalities.

In order to investigate this paradox, we looked for a municipality motivated to establish a collaboration regarding civic engagement and sustainable transition in an exploratory case study. We were fortunate enough to have Gladsaxe municipality as a case, which is a suburban area in the greater Copenhagen well-known for its visionary way of working with sustainability (State of Green, 2020). One of their significant actions towards sustainability has been to integrate the SDGs into their municipal strategy – which began to be developed in 2014 (Gladsaxe Strategy 2018-2022, n.d.). It became their guideline to reshape the municipality towards achieving a higher level of sustainability, which makes them a suitable case for the research in this thesis. Consequently, this partnership leads us to create the following research question, which is used as our guidance in the rest of the project.

How can we, by studying the current practices within Gladsaxe's citizen engagement, suggest another approach to support their visions within sustainability?

1.1. READING GUIDE

In the following, we describe how the project research will be developed and can, therefore, be seen as a guide of how the posed research question will be answered throughout this thesis.

For a better understanding of the thesis, this section outlines the following chapters and what each of them contributes to answering the main research question of this project. In total, there are eleven chapters (including the Introduction). Each of the chapters starts with a brief description of what will be explored in that section, the body of the work, and later, a sub-conclusion, where important findings will be outlined as well as carried to the next following chapter.

Following the current chapter, the following (chapter 2), an overview of citizen engagement in municipal development is presented, and it establishes an initial understanding of how governance at this moment is in Danish municipalities. This provides an overview of current practices and obstacles that the literature within these fields indicates. Chapter 3 outlines the analytical perspective on how the research and analysis throughout the thesis will proceed. Chapter 4 describes the methodology part; it shows the methods used during our engagements with the municipal employees throughout the process as well as how some tasks were performed using different design tools. Chapter 5 describes the narrative of the municipality of Gladsaxe. It characterizes the interviews we had with the municipal employees, which is presented in a narrative-style and, based on the previous chapters, it identifies their main problems regarding citizen participation. In chapter 6, the issues found in the previous chapter are utilized to find inspirational cases that are capable of successfully addressing the issues in improved ways, as well as how we could draw inspiration from the cases and suggest new engagement methods to our municipality. Chapter 7 presents the final solution - better yet, our suggestion to Gladsaxe - which addresses the main research question based on the previous chapters. Chapter 8 is the conclusion of the project. Finally, chapter 9 is a reflection of what has been done, what did and did not work as we imagined, the limitations of the project, and how the work can be further explored in the future. Chapters ten and eleven are reference and appendix, respectively.

1.2. DISCLAIMER

Disclaimer from Head of Studies and Head of Study Boards

COVID19 and the consequences of the lock-down of society and the university since March 13, 2020 have had influence on which activities that have been possible to stage and carry out as part of the project work. More specifically, this means that activities have been limited to online activities, and that activities such as Lab activities; surveying activities; on-site ethnographic studies and on-site involvement activities have not been possible. When assessing this project, please bear this in mind.

Student's Reflections

Originally, we sought out to study how citizens could be a part of municipal strategy planning and, thereby, gaining an understanding of how their interests could be incorporated in future municipal development. Going into the collaboration with Gladsaxe, we were provided with the unique opportunity to shadow the making of a strategy draft revolving around CO₂ reductions, and contribute by identifying hotspots of where citizen participation would be beneficial in their policymaking. Our primary contact in the municipality, unfortunately had to go into quarantine. Following, Denmark went into COVID-19 lock-down, which, naturally, limited our access to Gladsaxe municipality - and its employees. This situation caused a change in the plans, forcing us to rely on literature to identify inspirational practices that we could augment. We have, therefore, not had the opportunity to conduct on-site activities such as talking to citizens, local businesses or employees from the municipality nor being able to implement workshops with these actors. We were, however, fortunate enough to have spoken with six employees virtually during this period. That provided us with some valuable insights and it proved to be of extreme relevance for the project.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT AN OVERVIEW

*“Successful, vibrant healthy and happy cities arise out of
the visions of the many, not the powerful few.”*

Jane Jacobs



2. CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT AN OVERVIEW

In the following section, we will investigate the intersection of urban policymaking, citizen participation and urban development to explore the issues municipalities are currently facing. Within this study, we will introduce how a shift in urban policymaking and urban development can be identified and why it is so crucial that this change is happening. This will be supported with examples of how some municipalities are leading the way, in terms of innovative engagement processes. We will look at the UN's 17 SDGs, as they have made their way into strategies across various sectors of municipalities. This acquired research will serve as our knowledge framework within the field we study and it serves as the foundation of our project.

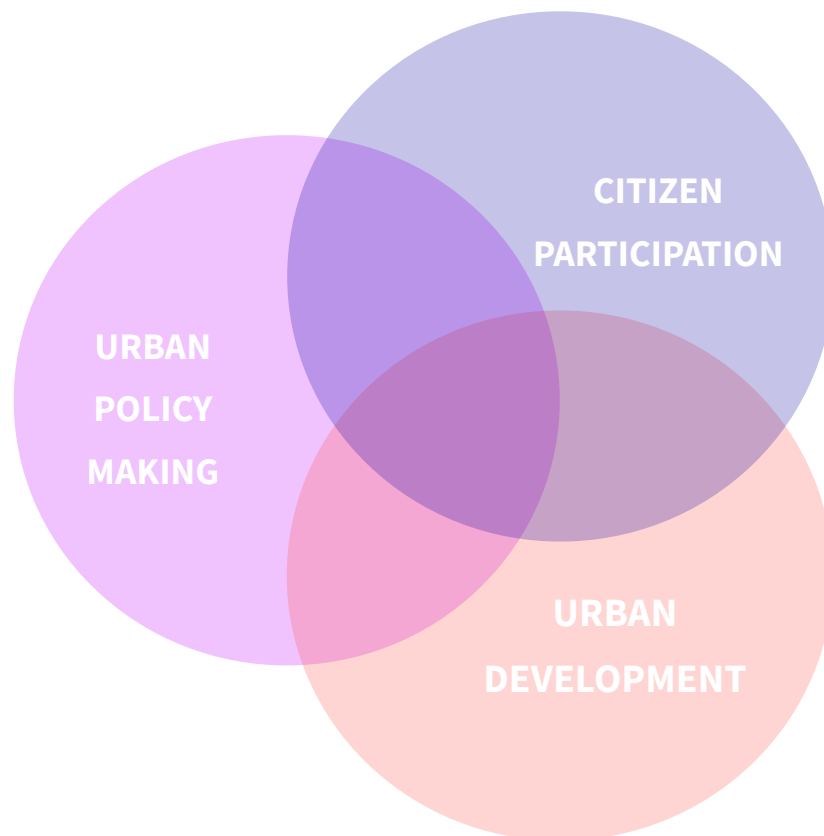


Fig. 1 - Fields of the overview (authors' illustration)

2.1. CHANGING PARADIGMS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The public sector has during time shifted from being authoritarian to inviting and thereby, changing its purpose and practices towards citizen engagement. Therefore, the history of the public sector is not completely irrelevant since it provides context to what it has evolved from, and why some dated practices, are still current in municipalities and can be seen as resistance and act as barriers for innovation. Thus, a brief explanation of the paradigms will be described to provide context to the transition that has happened throughout time.

Firstly, the paradigm of public bureaucracy, which can be defined as an era where the public sector was the definitive power, and shaped and regulated society by law, administration, taxes, etc. (Torfing et al., 2019). *“Citizens are placed on the receiving end of public services and perceived as passive and disempowered subjects whose welfare was highly dependent on public regulation and service provision.”* (Torfing et al., 2019, p.798). This way of leading publics gained a lot of criticism over the years and in the 1970s a shift started to arise. It was no longer adequate to simply use the citizen's money as the public sector pleased. New Public Management was enrolled as the new way of leading where the public sector was seen as a service provider and the citizens as clients or customers (Sørensen and Torfing, 2019). The citizens had become the focal point, however, so had efficiency. Being cost-effective and providing the citizens had left the public sector as a highly administrated and siloed entity with strict guidelines.

Nowadays we are seeing a new shift emerging. We are globally facing systemic challenges that affect how we should govern locally, and words as active citizenship, empowerment and sustainability are becoming the norm, especially in Danish municipalities. This has been named New Public Governance, where it is expected that citizens take ownership in their local community and the public sector should facilitate that process. However, as Bason (2018) states, there is still a long way to go.

The SDGs, developed by the UN and embraced in 2015 by the signatory countries (including Denmark), is one of the global initiatives that is currently leading many danish municipal strategies. The aim is to provide a common action plan (but not a “step-by-step” recipe) for all UN members to take action on the most pressing issues we globally face. The essence of the SDGs is not so much the goals themselves, since they were already known and had agreements to address them, but rather that they are seen compiled, and that their correlation becomes evident (Richardson, 2020). It focuses on a global partnership running until 2030 aspiring to integrate systemic thinking and realize that all global issues are deeply intertwined with each other.

“When designers center around the user, where do the needs and desires of the other actors in the system go? The lens of the user obscures the view of the ecosystems it affects.” - Kevin Slavin (Lloyd, 2020)

2.2. THE SHIFT IN DEMOCRACY THROUGH THE LENS OF PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

Innovation has been an inescapable word within the public sector for years, utilized as a way of expressing concerns and a call for a change of thinking, creating, and organizing. The public sector is governed by laws and rules that could be argued for being part of what is bringing innovation to a halt. It could be indicated that current policy practices are merely a part of a bigger problem, and perhaps to get the fuller picture, one might look towards democracy, and how that has changed over time. As Tucker expressed in 1995:

“Political leadership involves the ability to define problems that call for collective action, the design of new solutions and the mobilization of support and resources for their implementation (Tucker,1995).”

This was a visionary statement back then and it is thought so until this day. However, current studies within the area of social science, policymaking, and participation in urban development suggest alterations towards that the future of the political leadership within the public sector will be more co-. Co-design, Co-initiation, Co-creation, Co-implementation - all similar wordings but with different meanings and actions behind them (Sørensen and Torfing, 2018, Bason, 2018 and Voorberg et al., 2015). The essence of the co- is the gathering of actors to solve problems together. What differs is when in a process this gathering will occur. Bringing actors together can be a cumbersome process, and not all public authorities encourage participation as described by Sørensen and Torfing (2018).

“When actors with different resources, competences, and ideas are brought together in processes of creative problem solving, they are likely to produce a better understanding of the problem at hand, and engage in processes of mutual learning through which they can develop and test new and bold solutions while building a joint sense of ownership for their project.” Sørensen and Torfing, 2018, p. 389.

Unfolding this argument even further, Bason (2018) describes co-creation processes within public sector innovation as a way of creating divergence and assuring anchoring with the solution.

Nowadays, we face global issues that are interrelated, complex, and highly systemic (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2015, Richardson, 2020 and Bason, 2018), which call for systemic creative problem-solving. This has changed the role of what a civil servant today should be capable of. It is expected that civil servants have the skills to navigate these changes to accommodate increasing expectations and to develop solutions, in many cases, with even fewer resources available than before (Sørensen and Torfing, 2018, Nesta, 2019 and Agger et al., 2007). This shifting role is described by Agger & Hoffmann (2008) as a facilitator of complex development processes. They have to be capable of creating a link between several interests (public and private) and actors within projects for a mobilized process and

outcome. In the extension of that, OECD (2015) describes it as balancing a mindset of change, while being realistic on what actually can be mobilized.

However, research shows that it is not quite as easy as it might appear to bring actors together, facilitate the process and ensure a valued outcome (Agger et al., 2008 and Voorberg et al., 2015). Participation and innovation within the public sector are challenged with obstacles hindering the processes, barriers as the set organizational hierarchy, politicians not willing to take uncalculated risks, nor resign of the control (Sørensen and Torfing, 2018). Participation is, therefore, mostly welcomed in the design or implementation phases, instead of the preferred initiation phase.

“[...] politicians accustomed to holding all the formal political power and responsibility, and public administrators in public bureaucracies based on centralized control and professional expertise, are likely to shy away from involving citizens and their organizations in the initiation phases of public innovation projects, as this would imply a considerable loss of public control” (Sørensen and Torfing, 2018, p.390).

For active citizen engagement to be present, a different and more divided power dynamic would have to replace the current status quo (Sørensen and Torfing, 2018). If this is to be achieved, the public sector could tap into new resources, competencies, understanding of problems, challenges, and frustrations that citizens have (Sørensen and Torfing, 2018). So the question shifts to understand if citizens are willing to participate. A vast amount of literature and studies indicate that they are, and not only are they willing, they expect the municipalities to be more ambitious than they are now (OECD, 2015, Sørensen and Torfing, 2019, Rambøll; 2019 and Agger et al., 2008).

One of Denmark's most renowned consultancy companies - Rambøll - conducted the first comparative study of Danish cities based on all three aspects of sustainability (economic, social and environmental), and was based on answers from 4.700 citizens living in the biggest cities of the country. Overall, the study indicated that there was a gap between what a majority of citizens think is important concerning handling sustainable issues, and what they felt the municipalities and the government were doing about it. This does not necessarily mean that the municipalities are not doing anything. However, it speaks to the point that citizens need a more active role, and policymaking should be more transparent than what it is nowadays.

2.2.1.CURRENT ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Presently, municipalities do have practices assisting them in obtaining knowledge and opinions from relevant actors through various initiatives such as public hearings, citizen meetings, citizen panels, and citizen proposals (Agger et al., 2008). Some are more engaging and successful than others.

One initiative, in particular, has had a revival in 2015, which has resulted in it being practiced in more than half of the Danish municipalities. It is commonly known as the 17-4 committee, referring to the section 17 paragraph 4 in the local government act (Kommunestyrelsesloven) (Retsinformation, 2020; (Olesen and Torfing, 2019)). The 17-4 committee serves as a possible midway between citizen meetings and citizen proposals in terms of policy-making. With the citizen meetings, it is the council and the politicians that have ownership. The same holds true with citizen proposals, where citizens have the issue and the solution. The politicians, on the other hand, have no ownership. In these situations, therefore, it rarely becomes a reality. (Olesen and Torfing, 2019).

This form of representative democracy allows for direct participation to occur in policy deliberations on a concrete and tangible levels dealing with some of the crucial issues the municipality faces (Sørensen and Torfing, 2019). An establishment and prepared framework of a 17-4 committee are decided by the council, creating a temporary committee that can ensure representation of interests or to perform a preparatory or advisory function for the municipal council, the finance committee, or a standing committee (Retsinformation, 2020). It is commonly a composition of members of the municipal council, citizens with suitable competencies for the project, and representatives of the businesses within the area. It is important to state that it is a temporary committee that suggests and discusses the issues, but it does not have the authority to enact any policy-making. This is still a decision that is for the city council to decide. In other words, the politicians.

2.3. THE SHIFT IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

With the shift in the political scene, urban development has gone through a transition over time. Traditionally, urban development was about building new areas or redesigning existing ones for the better. In these situations, the planners were seen as leading experts (Munthe-Kaas and Hoffmann, 2017). Nowadays, however, it is not merely about the physicality of the construction, but rather a broader perspective interconnecting the creation of an area or building with other agendas such as culture, social initiatives or sustainable agendas (Realdania, 2016). This shift is seen in various governance levels, but, especially interesting for our project, is how it is linked to the municipality's actions regarding urban development. Many municipalities have concluded that the prior mentioned physical planning mentality no longer is considered sufficient, and the new ways must become the future practices (Realdania, 2016). As previously mentioned, with the civil servants, the urban planners do also have different roles to shift into. More specifically, developing competencies regarding the understanding and navigating more holistic issues within urban development and rehearsing potential futures to make the most sustainable choices (Munthe-Kaas and Hoffmann, 2017).

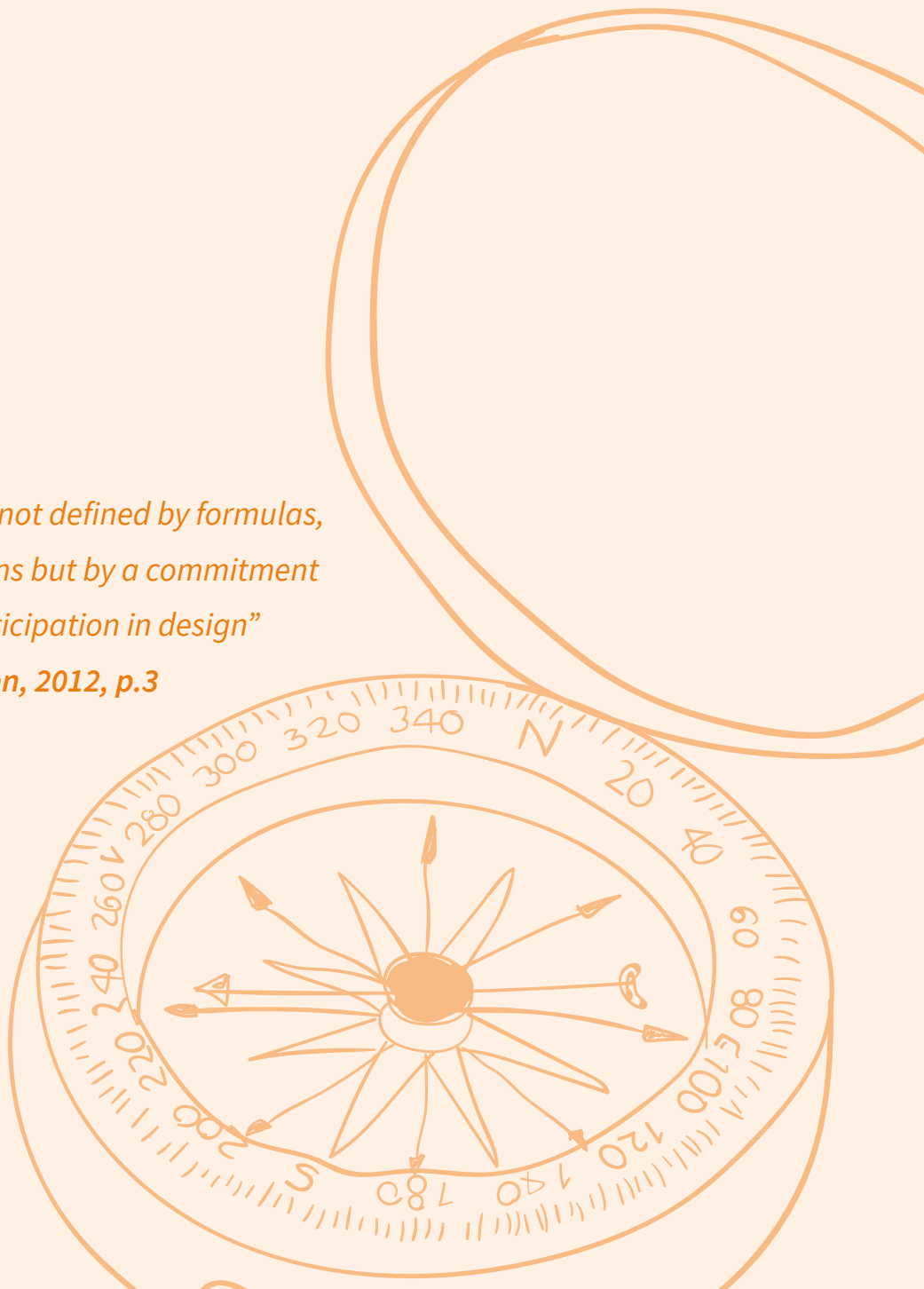
In this chapter, we have sought out literature in the respective fields of urban policymaking, citizen participation, and urban development. All with an outset in the research question of this project. This overview contributes to the understanding of how the various fields have developed and what the immediate challenges are. It has also made evident that through time these fields have become more and more intertwined and dependent on one another with the global agenda and issues.

Having this overview established, we will next outline the analytical perspective on participatory design. Both will serve as reference points and guidelines throughout the entire project and the development of the final suggestions.

ENHANCING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AN ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE

*“Participatory Design is not defined by formulas,
rules and strict definitions but by a commitment
to core principles of participation in design”*

Robertson and Simonsen, 2012, p.3



3. ENHANCING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AN ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE

The purpose of this section is to elaborate on how citizen engagement can gain from taking a Participatory Design type of approach and how it will help us derive the inspirational cases and develop the final suggestions for Gladsaxe.

Within the “world” of Participatory Design, there is a wide range of (sub-)topics that make up this theory. However, for the scope of this project, the answering of the research question and selection of inspirational cases for the final suggestions, we chose only the relatable and relevant sub-topics which could aid in the citizen engagement scenario. Thus, the important topics were: infrastructuring and agonistic participation – in how it can empower people and social innovation; the concept of politic and political; lastly, the idea of governance. In the following paragraphs, all of these areas will be further unraveled and discussed, and how it can help us understand the current practices as well as provide insights on how new and improved practices can take shape in citizen engagement.

3.1. INTRODUCING PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

Participatory Design was first developed in the 1970s in Scandinavia (Robertson and Simonsen, 2012 & Spinuzzi, 2005) when the introduction of computers started to change the working environment. The employees saw a need to respond to this change by requesting more power in the decision-making processes (Robertson and Simonsen, 2012). Workers wanted their voices to be heard in a more democratic manner. Thus, researchers set out to establish “language games” (Ehn and Kyng, 1991), which allowed highly skilled employees and lower-level workers to develop and refine new technologies in a collaborative manner. And to some extent, it allowed the low-skilled workers to keep control over their daily tasks.

In another perspective, participatory design is described as the process of constructing a “coherent body of knowledge” (Spinuzzi, 2005) in which all the important actors are engaged in an ever-evolving act of acquiring, developing and re-distributing the knowledge amongst the holders engaged, which consequently, would lead to the next phase of interaction. The act of engaging different actors and taking into consideration their knowledge are significant contributions of Participatory Design in which we intend to use as one of the central guidelines for the thesis.

One of the critical aspects of Participatory Design is knowledge. Understanding and acquiring knowledge requires a wide range of tools - ranging from interviews, prototyping and its analysis, and ethnographic observations, amongst others. All of these tools are used to grasp the problem, gather information from the

actors engaged as well as to spread this knowledge over and over in this loop of discussions. However, even more relevant knowledge can come from those who are at the front line, the users. They carry a wealth of knowledge that cannot be transferred to books and scientific articles. This is known as ‘tacit knowledge’ (Spinuzzi, 2005). This baggage of information is essential as a lot can be learned from it as well as being used for further developments. Therefore, what participatory design brings to the table is an understanding and approach on how to deal with this type of expertise. In accordance with Sanders and Stappers (2008), there is a new and different power relation in these design practices. The designer – in other words, the municipal administrative employee –, considered as the ‘dictator’ (Grossman, 2002) in the user-centered design, is now seen as the ‘facilitator’ and the actors (citizens), as the experts. This means that there is a great deal of change in the design world, bringing democracy and valuing tacit knowledge of the actors engaged in the process.

“Linking up the ‘bees’ – the individuals and small organizations that are buzzing with ideas and imagination – and the ‘trees’, the bigger institutions that have power and money but are usually not so good at thinking creatively. On their own, the bees can’t achieve impact. On their own, the trees find it hard to adapt”
(Murray et al., 2010, p.125).

3.2. SOCIAL INNOVATION AND AGONISM IN PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

In the lens of Björgvinsson, Ehn and Hillgren (2012), participatory design faces hefty challenges in the public administrations – as it could also be seen when we spoke with the Gladsaxe municipality employees and the lower enthusiasm for citizen engagement was apparent. The main issues are often related to the length of the participation and lack of resources (both time and monetary). However, as previously explained in this chapter, there is an arising need to engage with the public around local and global issues. Nevertheless, there is a necessity in changing and upgrading how to approach public issues Mouffe (2000). One proposition is, for instance, the introduction of a ‘agonistic democracy’ where authorities, experts and marginalized groups are challenged through constructive discussions – where a consensus is not necessarily the goal but, rather, the debate – where ideas, suggestions and other perspectives are allowed to be developed freely. This approach, if adopted by municipalities, can open up for future solutions regarding current and later issues that need to be solved by the municipality. As Björgvinsson, Ehn and Hillgren (2012) explained, “the goal of democratic politics is to empower a multiplicity of voices [...], and, at the same time, find constitutions that help to transform antagonism into agonism” Björgvinsson, Ehn and Hillgren (2012). In other words, agonism in certain ways brings actors together in a way promoting constructive debate which can lead to better outcomes for societies, and in our case, better municipality projects in which the majority of actors are engaged and helping achieve a common goal. Binder et al. (2011) and Latour (2005) additionally argue that these ‘social-material collectives’ (Latour 2005) are spaces where (municipal) issues are dealt with in manners that all voices are heard. Thus, creating opportunities for new propositions to emerge and long-term

relationships to develop through the participation processes. The main objective of these arrangements can be argued to be environments where new relations are formed, and sustainable social needs are fulfilled – something that some municipalities still struggle to achieve today.

Since the scope of the thesis is to suggest different engagement between the citizens, planners, and politicians of the municipality of Gladsaxe, it is relevant to bring up another branch of participatory design, the social innovation. According to Hillgren, Seravalli and Emilson (2011), social innovation leads the way to develop new solutions regarding the social needs of a community and strengthening the municipal society. To support this type of innovation, ‘infrastructuring’ (Björgvinsson et. al. 2010) should be implemented to advocate the development of long-lasting relationships between the actors. And we see it as being a vital component of municipalities such as Gladsaxe, because it helps to lead the way to open communication between actors and to foster the social innovation. Moreover, the relationship-building processes also allow for serendipitous opportunities to flourish in the design practices (Hillgren, Seravalli and Emilson, 2011). More so, this relationship should be considered as a long vision – almost infinite – where the bond between the actors is of extreme importance for the future of the municipality.

According to Murray, et. al. (2010), the engagement of actors through participatory design has been proved to be important for social innovation due to the fact that new ideas help foster new social engagements and meet the actor’s needs – including those of the municipality itself. Therefore, enhancing society’s ability to progress. Additionally, the European Union Commission has turned to social innovation as a way to deal with current situations happening in the continent but more than that, to help solve those problematics:

“It is about tapping into the ingenuity of charities, associations and social entrepreneurs to find new ways of meeting social needs which are not adequately met by the market or the public sector”
(p.21 in European Commission 2010).

In addition, Jégou and Manzini (2008) also argue that in Europe, the social innovation has a slightly different meaning – it entails that communities and public sectors should develop solutions to fulfill local needs.

Another important aspect of social innovation is the fact that, as previously argued, the designers (municipal employees) should act as facilitators, and thus transferring the skillsets and tools to the participants (citizens and others engaged) in order for the innovations to continuously adapt, evolve, and, therefore, foster the ongoing change to enhance the livelihood of the municipality (Hillgren, Seravalli and Emilson, 2011 and Burns et al. 2006).

3.3. POLITICS IN PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

Another area of Participatory Design of relevancy for this thesis is in relation to politics. Returning to the term ‘agonism’, DiSalvo (2010) introduces the notion of ‘agonistic pluralism’, where using the agonistic approach in the context of democracy and participation on political agendas make sense. It is argued that using ‘design for democracy’ (DiSalvo, 2010) enhances the participation of citizens and other actors for this matter in the politics. However, each actor and each location has its own perception of democracy and how it should be instituted. For that purpose, the agonistic approach makes sense where citizens, businesses (big or small) and the municipality bring the diversity of ideas into a common place (Björgvinsson, Ehn and Hillgren (2012)). These ideas would then be discussed but not necessarily to an agreement but rather to unravel new possibilities – as it has been discussed previously. These inquiries fundamentally should lead up to different perspectives and actions towards a more successful and developed municipality as it opens up for discussions on various topics regarding the status quo and how it can evolve based on the ideas and knowledge shared amongst those actors. DiSalvo (2010) namely, states that agonistic pluralism grounds democracy in a ‘productive conflict’. The idea is that agonism should strive to develop a society where different aspects of it are accessible to ample discussion. However, Mouffe (2000) argues that it can never be achieved due to the ever-evolving dipole of tension and discussion, but it notably makes the society more well-rounded facilitated by these openings that the events help unfold. Another relevant aspect (of democracy) is that for these discussions to take place, there needs to be spaces where participants can gather and open up topics for debate. According to DiSalvo (2010) “in such spaces, difference and dissensus are brought forward and the assumptions and actions that shape power relations and influence are revealed and challenged” (2010, p. 2).

However, for agonism to be implemented in the political sphere of communities, the distinction between ‘politics’ and ‘political’ is necessary to be understood and clarified. The former term concern the mechanisms which allows for governing, whereas the latter, is a “condition of ongoing opposition and contest” DiSalvo (2010). The issue is that politics usually acts against political by reducing the power of those in the lower hierarchy of the society (in our case, the citizens) and, per consequence, extending the politicians’ (and higher society) own hegemony (Honig 1993, Mouffe 2000, DiSalvo (2010)). This situation goes against the principles of democracy, agonistic pluralism and participation, as the actors’ voices are not equally heard – if at all taken into consideration – as it lessens the possibilities of disagreements and other conflict engagements. And we argue that, to some extent, that is what has happened and happens in Gladsaxe. That said, it is important to distinguish disarray from what political agonistic pluralism tries to develop in and for democratic societies. DiSalvo (2010) states, “political design [...] consist(s) of actions and processes from within, using familiar mediums and forms, to subtly, but powerfully, reveal and question the conditions and issues of democracy.” The objective of it is to then, through agonistic participation, develop new trajectories and actions leading towards sustainable changes in the direction of the unattainable democracy of Mouffe

(2000) and which can certainly lead to new improvements of the societies in municipalities and, in a bigger scale, nations.

3.4. GOVERNANCE IN PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

Governments are more pressured than ever to be more efficient and have particularly better public services (Bason, 2014). That said, only so much can be done with the resources (monetary and time) available at those public institutions. In that sense, participatory design and engagement of citizens can be a viable alternative to help solve some of the questions and issues as it is argued that citizens are (and have) potential (knowledge) resources and can take part in the reimagining of public services and public areas (Brandsen and Pestoff, 2006).

The municipality issues (services and public areas) can certainly be solved with the help of well-prepared designers. Rosenqvist and Mitchell (2016) pose, both design and governance walk hand-in-hand and are related to developing solutions to relevant problems in societies. Here we argue that the ‘designers’ are not only the sustainable designers but also citizens and the municipality employees.

But what is governance, and how is it related to participatory design? According to Kooiman (1999), governance is a collective of actors from different segments of society – including businesses, public and general citizens – who work together at developing creative solutions for the society’s and municipality’s conundrums “and attending to the institutions (government) within which these governing activities take place” Kooiman (1999, p. 70). The relation between governance and participatory design is important for the fact that the (sustainable) designers need to be aware of the arenas and to be critical of how their work on facilitating participation can influence social worlds (which could be different neighborhoods, inner-municipal communities) (Rosenqvist and Mitchell, 2016). It is also relevant to question and rethink the invisible power embedded in society and how those affect the values and norms present in all aspects of society. Being aware of all those facts can make or break a proposed solution for a certain issue that a (sustainable) designer is working on. As Victor Papanek stated back in the 1970s, (sustainable) designers need to be socially and morally responsible for their acts (Papanek, 1971).

More than that, (participatory) design aids at making governance more tangible to the general citizens (Tunstall, 2007). This is the case, because engaging people on redesigning of the government tools and acts, allows them to understand and to infer about the current practices held inside the municipalities (and at other government levels), thus opening the doors to questioning the work as well as the norms, visions and the more tangible aspects such as the experiences the citizens deal on their daily lives. These individual considerations were described by Kooiman et al. (2008) as the first, second and third (or meta) levels of governance. It is important for us, the (sustainable) designers, to be aware of those levels as it can help us

target a specific layer by utilizing different tools, engaging different actors to generate a successful intervention.

In addition, Rosenqvist and Mitchell (2016) argue that fundamental changes in government structures need to happen on higher levels (second and third). That is because it is in these layers that practices are formed and possibly never questioned. Therefore, it is important to try and expose those practices and discuss it openly – especially when problems arise or, in our case, procedures just do not work as expected. However, because at these layers the elements – norms, values, and visions – are invisible, then we, (sustainable-) designers, need to find unthinkable ways to correlate and surpass this ‘invisibility’. Questions such as “how might designers make the elements (norms, values, and visions) found at these orders of governance more explicit and thus open them up for collaborative re-design by citizens and their government?” Rosenqvist and Mitchell (2016) might help shed light on that perspective.

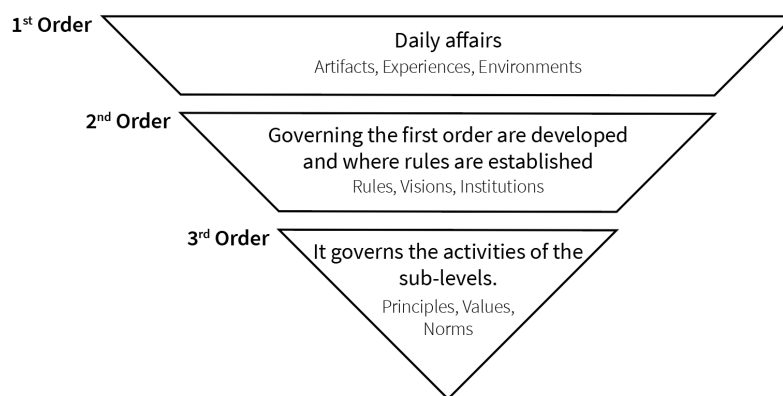
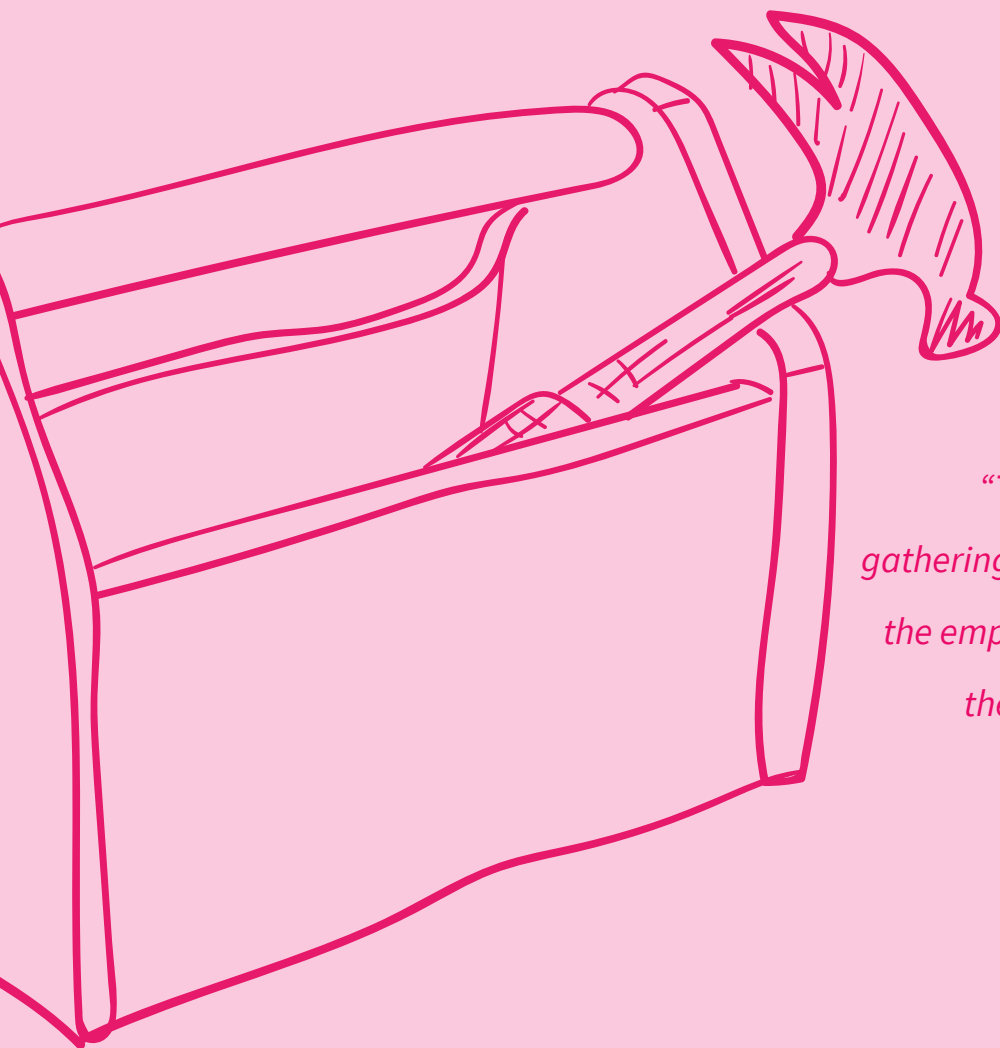


Fig 2 - The three different levels of Governance (authors' illustration)

The notion of governance layers and a strong critical mindset of us, sustainable designers, can help re-shape and promote different norms and principles – of course, when there is a need for that. But at the very least, these elements are brought to discussions and attention of all actors. Consequently, disadvantaged groups can, through participatory design, have their voices heard in policymaking and changing these normativism of governments. This is done by the study and unfold of the three levels of governance. “Designers can play an important role in uncovering elements of first, second or third order governance and open them up for participatory redesign.” (Rosenqvist and Mitchell, 2016). The utmost important aspect is that with this mapping, the roles of governments, in regard to the citizens, can be uncovered, detailed, and then help shape new and positive perspectives. In other words, by promoting agonistic pluralism in governance, that is when all voices of a community are heard and, we argue, that progress and the achievement of sustainability can be made.

With this understanding of participatory design and its nuances about agonism, social innovation, politics and governance, the work of the thesis henceforth revolves around explaining the methodology used throughout the work when interviewing and engaging with relatable actors. At a later stage, we incorporate the knowledge of the literature overview and this chapter in close relation to Gladsaxe municipality as well as how alternative engagement practices could be achieved with changes in the approach from the municipality. Lastly, the knowledge from this section will guide the selection of cases as well as the development of the final suggestions.

METHODOLOGY



“These methodologies assisted in gathering, analyzing, and understanding the empirical data acquired throughout the different stages of the project.”

Author’s perspective

4. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, we describe and discuss the methods chosen to help with the development of the thesis - with our primary driver for the analysis being the problem of engaging or not engaging citizens in the municipality projects. These methodologies assisted in gathering, analyzing, and understanding the empirical data acquired throughout the different stages of the project. The methods utilized were chosen to aid the process by acquiring data as thorough and scientific as possible. The data has been collected from February until May of 2020 in the municipality of Gladsaxe as well as through online participatory instances, when it was not possible to be close together with different actors due to the lock-down restrictions of COVID-19. This is also the reasoning of only being possible to get access to six actors from five distinct departments. The methods used during the work were ethnographic fieldwork – more specifically rolling the snowball, semi-structured, and online interviews –, language translation and the affinity diagram.

4.1. ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK

The beauty of ethnographic fieldwork, and the reasoning of why we use it as much as possible during the thesis, is that it allows us, the designers, to gain access to the tacit knowledge (Spinuzzi, 2005), previously explained, and the understanding of relationships relevant actors have as well as the types of demeanor towards specific instances these actors carry.

At the start of the project, our main contact were two actors from the environmental department. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessary change in the scope of the project, one of the actors put us in contact with different employees from the other five departments. These actors were closely connected with sustainability and were performing citizen engagement work. More than that, the municipality perceived these workers as the most visionary and forward-thinking in regard to citizen engagement. Additionally, in the municipality's mind, they carried the most relevant and interesting projects related to our thesis's topic.

These six actors hold the following job titles; the city and environmental administration consultant (By- og Miljøforvaltningen), as well as supervisor of the same department (Chefkonsulent, By- og Miljøforvaltningen), the consultant for strategy and communication (Chefkonsulent Strategi, Kommunikation og HR), the team leader for the Climate & Sustainability department, the Consultant for Library projects, and the manager for Sports Facilities. All of them currently working in the municipality of Gladsaxe. Some of these participants were engaged more than once in order to help answer new and upcoming questions as the research progressed and in different stages of the process.

Lastly, it is important to note that the City Council meeting - which is described and cited in the following chapter was selected based on its availability to the general public, but more importantly, because the content of the discussion was related to citizens engagement.

In the next sections, we unravel the components of ethnographic fieldwork used – roll the snowball, semi-structured, and online interviews.

4.1.1.ROLL THE SNOWBALL

Lindegaard refers to this method as the ‘snowball method’ (2008). Throughout the project, the engagement with actors is a vital part of the work as a form of gathering knowledge about the topic researched. In addition, these initial actors can help and facilitate the connection with other players who could be of relevancy for the project. And in the lines of Lindegaard (2008), by engaging these brand-new participants, it will lead to a larger angle of actuation, which, as said, leads to more relevant people. However, this process stops when new actors are not suggested from these engagements. Of course, this process is reliant on the initial actors’ eagerness to introduce new actors of relevancy for the project’s theme. And in our case, the initial contacts were very much well prepared and willing to connect us to other municipal workers.

4.1.2.SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

The semi-structure interview is a method to gather knowledge and information from the various actors, and it is based on open-ended questions which allow for ample discussions to happen in relation to a topic but it also has a freedom to diverge into other issues relevant to the research which had not been touched upon. Before the interviews begun, we prepared questions and topics which would serve as a guide for the conversations. It covered the main topics that were relevant to the actor’s field of expertise, including their process and views on citizen engagement. These questions were based on previous knowledge and experience we had on participation as well as the new information the literature overview and theoretical sections provided. These chapters highlighted tendencies in citizen engagement that needed to be further researched for Gladsaxe. During the development of the questions, we took care to not craft ‘leading questions’ (Given 2008) and not ‘closed questions’ as these could influence the participant’s answers as well as providing a very shallow answer. As Galleta (2013) mentioned, we took these interviews and engagements as “a repertoire of possibilities” Galleta (2013).

Due to the circumstances, it was only possible to interview a certain group of actors – all of them working for the city of Gladsaxe. The main areas of focus during the interviews were the previous and current processes (for citizen participation) as well as how the future actions would be conducted and their visions regarding citizen engagement. In order for us to gather that type of knowledge, we interviewed employees from different strategic levels and different departments, as described above. The reasoning behind was to give an ample understanding of the practices and issues that different perspectives allow. Therefore, we argue that

by speaking to different workers, our understanding of how Gladsaxe positions itself in relation to citizen engagement was much more well-rounded. The first two interviews happened at the town hall presently with two employees (both from the Climate and Sustainability department). One was a project leader whilst the second interviewee was the department chief. These interviews established the initial ground and background of citizen engagement in the municipality as well as their initial perspectives regarding the topic. The other interactions were done via web conferencing programs with four municipal employees from different departments.

Even though, we would have liked to engage with other actors such as citizens of different parts of the municipality, the information acquired was indeed relevant to the project and helped us in developing a much better end solution.

4.1.3. ONLINE INTERVIEWS

Most interviews, which were supposed to be done face-to-face, had to be rescheduled to be performed over the internet due to the global pandemic. These interviews were based on the same principles as the semi-structured ones. The questions were formulated before the engagement and crafted in an open-ended format to invite the participant to talk freely about the issue in question as well as to allow for freedom of direction the interview could head - of course, within certain boundaries relevant to the project.

There were five instances in which this approach was used. All of it towards the end of the project but to vital importance for the work we have been doing during that stage. It was used web conference programs with video abilities, therefore, both designers and actors could interact with each other during the talk.

4.2. LANGUAGE TRANSLATIONS

As this thesis was developed in collaboration with a Danish municipality – Gladsaxe – and that one of the members of this thesis is a non-Danish (nor does he speak the language), it is important to address the language translation instances which were an intrinsic part of this project.

Many articles and public hearings were only available in Danish, as well as some of the interviews performed were also done in the native language of the interviewee. This was done in order for them to provide their best insights and not be limited by another idiom. However, our Danish group member had to translate the recordings and writings. That does not come by simply as some of the translations are not directly translated but a matter of understanding the context and then making the full translation of the phrase, instead. Of course, every sort of translation (being it linguistic or not) comes with some drawbacks – for instance, the true meaning of a text or speech can be lost when converted to another language. Moreover, it may not make

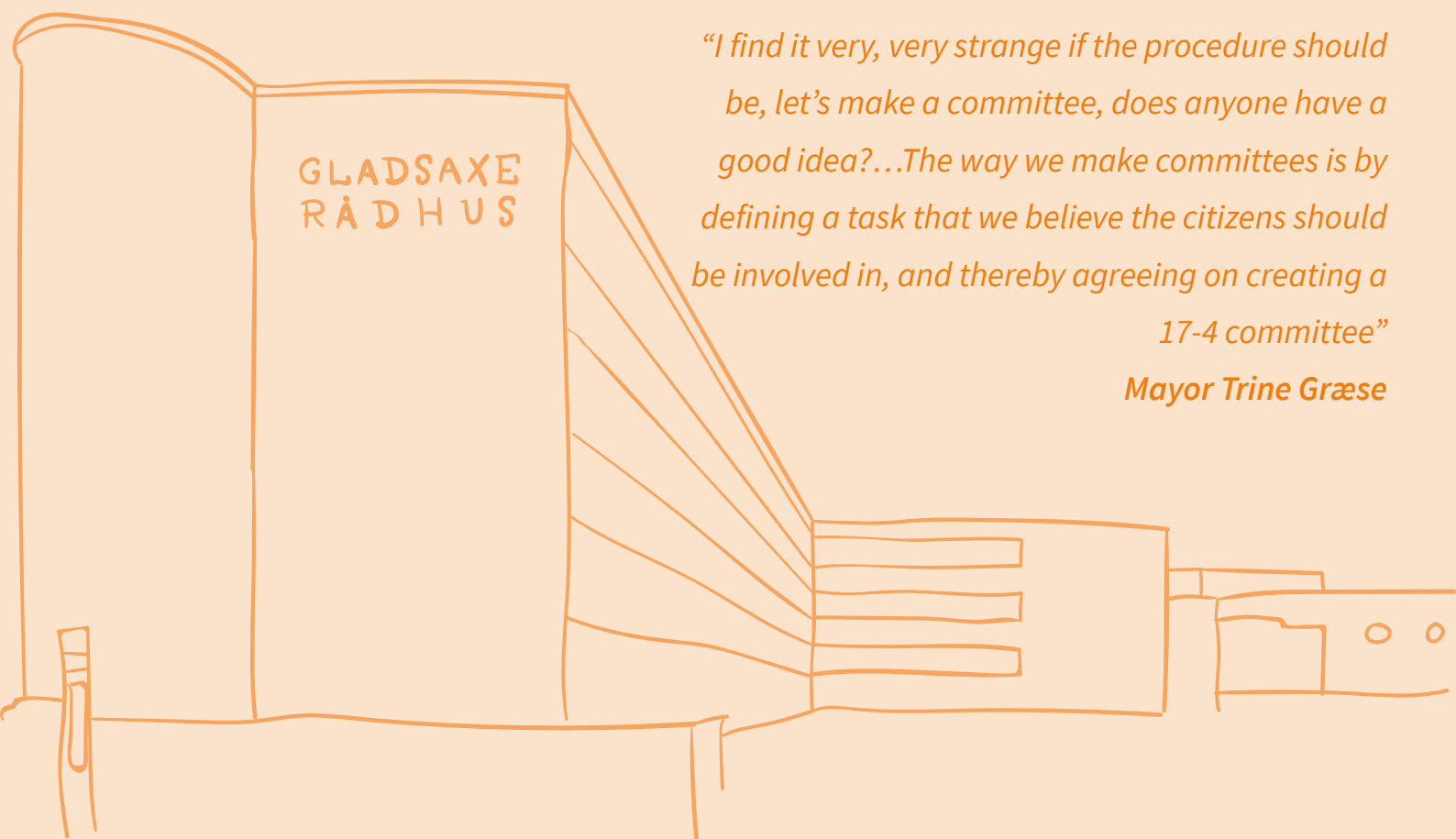
sense in the final language (English), therefore, a minimal interpretation is required. That said, we tried to abstain our own opinions and perspectives as much as possible to not interfere with the translations. However, some ideas could have been lost in the processes which occurred throughout this thesis.

4.3. AFFINITY DIAGRAM

Due to the amount of interviews performed during the period of the thesis, a lot of information needed to be processed in order to attain the issues regarding public engagement in the municipality studied. For that reason, we chose to use the affinity diagram method, where, through a lot of shuffling of statements, the main issues emerged naturally.

Following the considerations presented in the chapter “Affinity Diagram” from the book “Contextual design: Design for Life” (Holtzblatt and Beyer, 2017), the main aspects and quotes from the interviews were placed in a plain large piece of paper and sorted gradually into different groups. These clusters emerged bottom-up from the data itself and were not predetermined by us. The process was iterative, as rearrangements are an integral part of developing the affinity diagram until the issues arise from the clusters. The main difference from a typical affinity diagram is that the issues found in this project were not translated into design specifications. Rather, in our case, it was the main goal of the diagram - to find the issues, which later we would address in the Inspirational chapter.

NARRATIVE OF GLADSAXE MUNICIPALITY



"I find it very, very strange if the procedure should be, let's make a committee, does anyone have a good idea?...The way we make committees is by defining a task that we believe the citizens should be involved in, and thereby agreeing on creating a

17-4 committee"

Mayor Trine Græse

5. NARRATIVE OF GLADSAXE MUNICIPALITY

This chapter introduces the municipality of Gladsaxe, the politicians perspectives on citizen engagement and what the views from six different municipal workers, who work more closely with the citizens are.

To get an understanding of the status quo of the citizen engagement, we first hear about a public hearing from the City Council (translated from Danish) and how the decision-making processes is currently done in Gladsaxe. In a second moment, six different employees - from different municipal departments - interviews are presented. In these meetings, we spoke about their roles and projects, the past and current perspectives on citizen engagement, the challenges of doing so and well as future perspectives. Following, these interviews were used to build an affinity diagram where we could pin-point the major issues with citizen engagement as well as suggestions which would later be used in the future stages of this project. We conclude the chapter by presenting the final issues which will be addressed in the following chapters as well as how these are interrelated to the literature overview and the theoretical perspective.

Gladsaxe is a suburban city in the greater Copenhagen area, and as many other municipalities, it faces some political issues - including the engagement of its citizens. This is the reason why we chose to partner up with Gladsaxe to investigate their methods regarding citizen engagement – we were curious of what citizens' role is in one of the most sustainable municipalities in Denmark (State of Green, 2020.).

5.1. CITY COUNCIL MEETING A PEEK INTO THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY OF GLADSAXE

Our journey into Gladsaxe starts by going into the City Council meeting, where we hear the politicians talk about policymaking, how they perceive the engagement of citizens and consider the 17-4 committee described in chapter two.

It was the last Wednesday of January 2020, the City Council of Gladsaxe was gathered for one of their many annual meetings. Many topics were on the agenda as any other city council meeting, however this time an unusual voting was on the agenda.

'I have in collaboration with the administration looked at how to strengthen the cohesion and the joint identity in Mørkhøj, this has led to the proposed 17-4 committee: Our Mørkhøj 2025, based on the terms of reference for this committee, where the committees purpose and tasks in greater detail is described' - Mayor

Trine Græse

The mayor continued by describing in great detail which deliveries this 17-4 committee should be engaged in, how many members, which competencies they already were looking for and the time period of the 17-4 committee. She suggested that the committee should be launched on February 1st – merely three days later.

The proposition was met with some frustrations, wonderings and skepticism from the other parties due to the fact that they had not been invited to take part in these political deliberations.

Astrid Søborg from Venstre (Liberal Party) was the first one to express her deepest concerns saying

“In Venstre we strongly believe in democracy. Therefore, we do not appreciate this. It is being played with our local democracy”, and she added “this has taken place behind closed doors.” - Astrid Søborg

According to Venstre, the ongoing initiatives in Mørkhøj had not had sufficient time to show their effects. However, this was not the only concern she wanted to address since the appointed chairman was in fact Serdal Benli (F), the former deputy mayor whom had stepped down earlier that month.

“It is an odd coincidence [...], I think, this paints a disturbing picture, and I think the mayor has some explanation to do. It is a problem if one uses our democracy to get a remuneration for political support, of course the mayor is more than welcome to disprove my allegations.” Serdal Benli(F)

Following, other parties expressed their support for this type of committee, but were not satisfied with the process.

“The proper process would have been to deliberate on suitable topics for a 17-4 committee, there has been many during the negotiations of budgets, for instance green transition.” - Trine Henriksen(Ø).

“It is important that processes regarding these committees need to be open and engaging.” - Claus Wachmann (B)

“I can overall say, what I have said many times before, Dansk Folkeparti are completely against these types of committees. We are 25 members in this city council, and we have chosen to take some decisions, and then when these 17-4 committees came was it like all decisions should suddenly be place out in committees.” - Kristian Niebuhr (O)

Then the time came for the Mayor to defend her choice of actions and finalize the vote determining whether the 17-4 committee regarding Mørkhøj would be agreed upon. She began with the following

“I find it very, very strange if the procedure should be, let’s make a committee, does anyone have a good idea?...The way we make committees is by defining a task that we believe the citizens should be involved in, and thereby agreeing on creating a 17-4 committee” – Mayor Trine Græse (A)

In the ensuing debate, she ensured her colleagues that the citizens would have no power of making decisions in any way.

“There should be no doubt that the decision-making lies within the administration of traffic and engineering, 17-4 committees are not decision-makers. They can make suggestions which a committee of the administration will review, and then this administration will make the decisions.” – Mayor Trine Græse

Her statement was followed by Henrik Bach Mortensen (V)

“The majority of things listed in this assignment could be handled by our own fixed committees, that is how we normally do things in our municipality. Of course, there is other municipalities that choose to do things differently.” - Henrik Bach Mortensen (V)

“We should stick to solve those problems that can be solved by our fixed committees.” - Henrik Bach Mortensen (V)

The final saying in this matter, before the voting, was done by Lone Yalcinkaya (V). She disclaimed that she had contacted the Appeal Board to look into the lawfulness of appointing the former deputy mayor as chairman.

Then the politicians casted their votes for the 17-4 committee.

The narrative presented extracted from the City Council meeting audio recording, which is available at the municipality’s website. This recording was chosen because it addresses the 17-4 committee, which is supposed to enable citizens to have an influence. However, it is evident from the hearing that the politicians disagree on the issue of citizen engagement. They still hold a top-down approach, where they make the decisions for the citizens and the municipality - which is the opposite of what this thesis advocate, the bottom-up approach, where the citizens engage throughout the policymaking processes.

After getting an initial understanding of how the politicians view citizen engagement, we looked towards the civil servants to find out how they perceive it. The municipality has various levels and departments, for that matter, we chose to speak with different sectors in the municipality to gather different perspectives. Therefore, in the following subsection, we present six snapshots of how citizen engagement looks like seen from the administrative personnel perspective.

5.2. CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

THE CIVIL SERVANTS' PERSPECTIVES

In this section we are going to listen to the six interviewees from different departments in the municipality. Through the method of role the snowball, these people were introduced and gave us their perspectives on how they see the past, current and future of citizen engagement in Gladsaxe, as well as what challenges they currently face with this practice of engagement. For ease of reading and relevancy, we chose to present the interviews in a profile scheme. These interviews helped us get a better understanding their views regarding how public engagement in Gladsaxe is done, and what are the hurdles they currently face.

5.2.1.PROJECT LEADER

We are talking to the Project Leader from the Climate & Sustainability department. This person is engaged in the development of the second phase of the sustainability strategy and integrating the different aspects of the municipal strategy into accomplishable goals.

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

In relation to the current projects, the project leader says:

“We identify (certain areas) as being key to us in our context (of the new strategy), and we are going to work with them, [...] which is pretty much what the classic strategy does.”

“It is truly up to the City Council; they determine what they are ready to do and what they find important” (in regard to the strategy).

“As long as we have some indicators that are not necessarily quantifiable” and “we have to prove with numbers, yeah okay we've lowered the CO₂ emissions by so and so in this in this sector” (the politician will approach such project).

“We're also under pressure in terms of time that we have to deliver something with a lot of those unknowns which is the political reality.”

In relation to citizen engagements and how it is done in the department, the project leader says:

“I have my doubts whether we're going to be able to (engage citizens). I would like to, but I doubt that we will be able to get [...] civil engagement – [...] go and ask citizens individually or groups, I think it will be more on a representative.”

“We do (citizen) involvement, but a lot of it is more centered on smaller projects.”

“They put out a call, people have to apply and then the municipality will choose the representatives as a fixed group.”

“Now we're going to set a team to work with it. And in that team, we need some citizens that have some sort of relation to whatever it is that we are doing. Some politicians because they have to be there and they are the decisive power, and they have mandate. We need somebody from the municipality, with the expertise to, at least, facilitate, we need maybe some scholars or people that work with it in their daily lives so that they are more kind of advisory people. [...] And then they work with that challenge for whatever the defined time frame is, and then they bring in recommendations input to the decisive to people”

CHALLENGES

In relation to challenges the department faces, the employee said:

“We have to work with the city planners, we have to work with our road department. [...] The borders are kind of [...] disappearing a little bit more (and) becoming a bit more mushy than they used to, which of course is something that an old organization needs to get used to. Yeah, because how do you adapt to that reality [...]? And now you have to do this thing, but you also have to kind of collaborate”.

And

“So that's a bit of kind of that dilemma of when do we actually engage, which I'm a bit in doubt. Well it's good to get them to well qualify areas and say okay is this actually a real problem, and how big is the problem, how do you experience it, all that kind of stuff. But then what do we do, like, how can you see yourself, helping us achieve this, or is this something else that we should do or like what action are you missing, how much regulation are you ready to accept.”

FUTURE VISIONS

Regarding the future of the department, the worker goes on saying:

“I would like it to have more engagement, [...] get more user perspective. And [...] what are the limitations to your behavior now and then making a bit wider, rather than focus on more technical specific area where it will be interesting to tap into. [...] I would like to look more kind of, well how are we designing the way that we live?”

“We (the department) bounce, not solutions out to them say okay we need you to do this and this, but we rather say we have a real big problem with this. Can you (citizens) help us solve this in a clever way? So, we are putting out the problems, rather than the solutions, to them and then we get their feedback.”

“So tell us about how do we create the frames internally for us to be able to do a proper engagement process.
[...] We are stuck.”

It is clear that the Climate & Sustainability department, from the lenses of the Project Leader, has some issues regarding citizen engagement. The actor sees that their current way of selecting and engaging the citizens in smaller projects is not ideal, even though the department is under a constant strain and time pressure.

5.2.2.CHIEF CONSULTANT

In this second interview, we talk to the Chief Consultant for the Climate & Sustainability department – this person is in a higher hierarchical level in relation to the Project Leader . The current project that this person is engaged in is the development of the CO₂-reducing strategy for Gladsaxe which is part of the municipal Sustainability Strategy.

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

The conversation started around the perspectives on the politicians, the role of facilitators and a new type of engagement in the department.

“The politicians are actually very interested in how citizens can be involved, they like those stories where it was a success.”

“I think somehow that there is some momentum in it (CO₂ reducing strategy), and I believe is the future, so I think it is one direction we will strive towards in whatever speed that is possible for us.”

“(The current strategy development has) some sort of facilitator which has to get the businesses to co-operate together locally, and help to create a sustainable growth, an interesting city and new ways to collaborate.”

“(The person) is facilitating the meetings, finds the right people, speakers, and frames what has to happen next time, and in general keeps the energy high, a midwife, a supporter, a facilitator.”

“(Partnerships) is a completely different way of thinking about involvement, because municipalities are doing something, businesses are doing something, citizens are doing something [...] we would like all actors to get onboard on the agenda and begin to think - how can they take part in unfolding it, what can they do. So, in that regard, I think we are changing.”

The department was also learning how to recruit citizens for the projects and how it performs in projects.

“Shouldn’t we try to announce for participants, and then we did and we were really unsure of how many would show interest and spent their time on it [...], 20, I think, ended up applying and that was actually more than we could have hoped for.”

“(For the library garden) where they interviewed some children, some elderly and some other different people, about what they were dreaming about, and that was in the really early phase [...] it worked very well, (there were) some fun things that came out of it [...] it was a fun process, it became a fantastic and good playground which is interesting for children and elderly to just sit and enjoy the flowers and look at the children. So, in that way, it serves various purposes than only as a playground.”

CHALLENGES

When speaking about the department challenges, the employee argues that:

“Yes, that is such a good question, because it is one of our challenges (citizen engagement), there is no doubt about it being resource demanding to initiate this form (of engagement), which is the very reason that we haven’t done it in the extent that we really wish for. [...] How can we do it in a way where we (retain) the energy [...] there is also some learnings in how to facilitate, the type of partnership meeting in a good way and how to be in the role of a municipality since we have many caps on by both being an authority, but also an initiator and facilitator, and sometimes a planner, that is a lot of roles and we are not champions yet, but we want to be.”

“I think most people would probably say that they like to participate earlier in the process.”

When talking about the challenge of where the facilitator role should ‘sit’ in the organization, “the question is whether (the facilitator) should stay in one place somewhere central that you come and draw upon, or if it should be distributed out in many parts of the municipality [...]. There is always a demand for having some central people to fix the communication, facilitation and the good meetings, it is just difficult to make it happen.”

FUTURE VISIONS

When talking about the future aspirations, the Consultant says:

“We would like to develop a concept for how to engage children and young adults, together with the children and young adults [...]. We say how would it make sense for you to be working with green transition.”

“I believe the issues one has to solve have changed somehow. When you were in a municipality previously, it would be creating good routes, build good bike routes, infrastructure and good planning, but now it is way more behavioral change, and get our employees, companies, our children, young adults and citizens to consider whether they should use the bike route instead of driving a car.”

“The themes we work with have changed, and that is why it is also necessary for us to move our thinking about how we should work.”

In the perspectives of the Citizen Consultant, the citizen engagement in Gladsaxe has issues to be addressed – which is relatable to the perspectives of the Project Leader. They lack knowledge on how to do the engagement process. However, she thinks that a facilitator would improve the department’s work flow when in contact with the citizens.

5.2.3. STRATEGIST

In this interview, we spoke with the Strategist from the Communications, Strategy and HR department. The person is in close contact with the Mayor and is responsible for implementing the municipal sustainability strategy.

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

When speaking about the past and current projects, the strategist is very clear:

“We have to be clear as a municipality and what can we provide, where do we need the cooperation, the involvement of the citizens? So, it was in the outset, a very top down strategy somehow worked from the City Council. My focus was to get them to agree on which sustainability measures should we prefer and work with in Gladsaxe. [...] That was kind of the first step to select some sustainable development goals that were very close to the heart of the politicians in Gladsaxe.”

“And I think that was a (fairer) way because if you invite 200 people and ask them [...] you get very different answers, and it can be a quite a muddy process, lot of the work will be done within the city hall anyway.”

“It is very complex to get politicians to agree on the same things when they have different colors. It [...] would maybe not be possible to make a strategy anyway.”

CHALLENGES

In relation to the challenges the department faces, it was mentioned

“My hope is that it will be taken by the citizens and businesses in Gladsaxe and [...] (and) how can they contribute; how do they want to contribute.”

“I thought they (the citizens from one association) would come with a big list for the municipality to fix. But they came with other ideas.”

“It (the top-down approach) will not have as much appeal in the public when it comes back”. Additionally, “(it is) so much stronger when it comes from the citizens.”

“We did not have an expert or anything”, and “(we) try to open it as much as possible not to get it too over-complex”.

“We work with the citizens, so our important task in the organization was to get every employee in our sector to see the citizens, as co-creators. [...] It's a different view if we can change it in our everyday work, then it will make a big difference for the citizens, so that's a very important way for us to go and get this license to operate sustainably out to everybody who is in contact with the citizens [...]”

FUTURE VISIONS

As for what is to come, the strategist had some visions in relation on the engagements:

“The formulation of the strategy was an internal political process [...], and now I think the implementation process is very much looking outward. It is not very common to do so as a municipality in the general level. [...] But how to invite civil society to participate and are they interested in political strategies? I don't know.”

“We wanted to make some bigger events and tell about the strategy. We have [...] the Gladsaxe event in August, where we have a broader involvement and focus on the strategy. But we also wanted something more specific.”

In another aspect, the strategist mentions:

“I am looking very much forward to the impact of the partnership with UNICEF and child friendly cities [...]. They (the children) have quite a different perspective (about) the world and also the city.” Then it was spoken about the knowledge-gathering approach for these projects. “Take little areas first and then what did we learn broaden it out to other areas, that's kind of a work method”.

“[...] we have concluded that we have to do it (engagement) more limited, as little events work better than big events, big broad events on very broad questions.”

From this interview, it is clear that the municipality, or at least this department, does not have a clear picture on how to engage the citizens, how to conduct the engagement events. However, it seems that there is some understanding that a change is needed, and more voices need to be heard – shift from the top-down to the bottom-up approach. Some events where civil associations brought up suggestions and ideas to be implemented – bottom-up approach – seemed to have worked better in completing and engaging citizens. Therefore, the Mayor seemed to be interested and wanted to push that type of activities, as mentioned by the strategist.

5.2.4. TEAM LEADER

The interviewee for this talk is the Team Leader for the Climate and Nature department. This person is responsible for several climate adaptation projects within the municipality, including the development of the Kong Hans garden and the City Hall park.

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

“Now we had (the 17-4) committee, and it was a new way to gain some other voices than just the professional voices of the administration, and it was an ideal opportunity to drag this citizen engagement out [...] do some completely different than we usually do, giving them a local area, a bag of money and say ‘you on your own have to come up with projects you think would be interesting for this area’.

“In the first meeting, it became clear for people (citizens) that it was not one of those formal meetings where you could bring your wishlist and deliver it to the administration. You had to be the one to work for it and make those wishes come true. That drove a lot of people away, so we ended up with three-to-four citizens in the group.” The group came up with ideas that the public could vote for.

“There has been an acceptance of the people who sign up as active (citizens), they are the ones with the influence.” Evaluations of the process showed that the engaged citizens felt like they had gained valuable insights into how compromises are made, and the processes of assessing possible solutions.

CHALLENGES

“In those two concrete projects (garden and park) [...], we had an employee which was a bit atypical in regard to how we usually recruit. She is not with us anymore (*a consultant). It was a project hire over a couple of years, and one thing was for sure, some of the things she was good at have pushed a lot of things, and then I think learning by doing.”

“When we wanted to do something a bit more classic and (we were) a bit careful (with the engagement actions), the consultant could keep us on track and (would say): *that is not the intention with this, that is not what is of importance.*”

FUTURE VISIONS

Gladsaxe has just finished their new citizenship strategy, and with that, a new network for the whole municipality will be created to gather experiences across, and how various projects have worked with citizens, engagement and co-creation.

“One has to feel comfortable in driving some of these processes, and there is a lot of work in transforming wished scenarios into a municipal context. Therefore, there are a lot of good things to be learned from each other, and mistakes already made.”

It is clear that this person and its department think that citizen engagement is a resource demanding process. In addition, the engagement process in the department is not necessarily completely aligned. For instance, some projects they choose to engage citizens, and in other, there is no engagement. It was also clear that a new mindset is necessary to break the status quo of how they do their work – as shown by the usage of a consultant in the engagement project. In addition, we argue that the projects should not “be done just by the citizens”, it is a communal endeavor, therefore, all, including the municipal workers should be present in the engagements.

5.2.5.DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT

We spoke with the Development Consultant working with the libraries of Gladsaxe. This person is responsible for developing the “city escape” projects (involving gardens) and how the libraries of the future would look like. This consultant has a lot of engagements with the public.

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

“In the past [...] it was very much as a lot of municipalities started(,) [...] they (municipality) have fought the project almost through. And then they have to engage the citizens, and they make meetings where people can come and give their opinion on the project, but not a lot can be changed at that time.”

In projects collaborating with architects, it was recommended “to open up your institutions, and especially built for and with the citizens”.

“It has been very successful in the way we have built (the library garden) because we build it with the people. And it has really become a hotspot in the city [...] people with children now want to participate in the library”.

“Today, we try (citizen engagement), it's not to say that we do it all the time because that would be a lie, but we try to think that we need to have knowledge, we need to know something about the people we're building for. We need to get to see how they act, how they behave in a cityscape before we can actually do a permanent solution”.

CHALLENGES

It is seen that there is a need for more engagement with people in order to build a city for the inhabitants.

“People like to live in Gladsaxe, but they were not too happy about the city life.”

“We had a lot of trouble getting people to show up. Those who showed up were not necessarily those we wanted to make the moves for. It was often those who always come when there is a (complaining) citizen.”

Then it was mentioned “when you ask people what they want, what they dream of. It's often quite hard to imagine something different from the things that you already have. And so, people often say yeah if there was a bench here. I would sit on it. Often, but it's not always said connectable with how people act when it is there.”

And “[...] it (engagement) takes time, and it's not for everyone, and it also takes a lot of knowledge. [...] We don't do it in all of our city programs.”

“It's quite difficult to argue to have the time to do this kind of engagement with citizens. How much time do you need (for a project), and then you go very classical. So, you say okay the project has to be open at that time. So, we go backwards, and then. Okay, we have to engage, architects, we have to have some time to build it, etc. Okay, here's the little time slot you have for the engagement of the citizens.”

It was pointed to the importance of engaging different groups: “it's very important not to just talk to the ones who are for your project. It's also very important to identify and get into some sort of dialogue [...], because often they have some knowledge that is very valuable.”

FUTURE VISIONS

“So, it's very important that those of us who work with (citizen engagement), that we sit in the project groups so we can push, and push and push and push to get more time (to do the engagements).”

“I think it's very important also to lean on other departments within [...] the city”. And also, the need to be aware that some time, the way of doing projects falls back to the old methods.

“It is more and more a way of doing in many municipalities (citizen engagement), because a lot of politicians like to give the power to the people, so to speak. And, therefore, we cannot do a lot as a municipality without engaging the citizens that live in the city and that makes sense.”

It is clear that this employee has much more experience with citizen engagement in relation to the other municipal people. Possibly, it is because the department (libraries) is much closer to the citizens. Regardless, it was shown that they still need to argue and push for more citizen engagement when speaking to the higher levels of the municipality. The department also struggles to get the citizens engaged, and those who show up may not be the ones needed for the projects. However, it was recognized that a broader spectrum of citizens is important for the engagements.

5.2.6. MANAGER OF SPORTS FACILITIES

Lastly, we had the chance to speak with the manager of the sports facilities of Gladsaxe. This person is responsible for managing the economy, its employees and the development of related projects.

PREVIOUS AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

The talk revolved around the projects in which the department engaged users in the selection process of artificial grass and how they work developing projects.

“We told the players from the club to come and say which one of these (types of grass), (they) prefer”.

“The last (football) pitch which was done two years ago with artificial grass was just a decision on a desk.”

During the interview, it was stated that the current practice is a way to listen to the users but also to keep them quiet as well as providing an image that they are listening to the citizens.

“What do they (clubs and general public) want [...]. But we do not make a huge public involvement that talking to everybody in the street”.

“We do not make a big meeting where everybody can speak up what they think. We know we have to make a narrow small group. Yes, which we give the power to make the decision.”

CHALLENGES

“Involvement takes time. Yes, and it's much faster to do a fast decision or know your own instead of involving the users afterwards but the result is very often much better (when involving the citizens).”

“They (citizens) will be involved in to choose the final project. Somehow, I don't know exactly how we are going to manage that yet, but they will be involved, but they won't have the final word. It's the politicians.”

“We just, as a community, say hey, you can get it as you want if you (clubs and general public) agree. Yeah, it's fine. If you do not agree, then we have to make a decision, but do not tell us afterwards we did listen to you.”

“No, none of us are educated in this process (citizen engagement), but [...] it's a skill that you develop while you're working with it.”

“The public opinion is sometimes very ordinary. Their references are often limited to what they know”. It was argued that citizens have a limited capacity to be visionaries.

“It is true, because if you want an idea to grow, you have to (implant) it in a group, to make them take the ownership and make it their feelings that is their idea.”

“It's a question of getting the knowledge into the project as early as possible. Okay. And to open up the process.” Later, it was mentioned that obtaining the knowledge takes time and the employees do not have too much of it. “And that brings you bad decisions because your knowledge is not solid enough for making the right decision”

At some point it was described how engaging the citizens is not often an easy task. “I get into a person and say hey, you are a specialist in this area, a citizen or (whomever). Please tell me what you want. Then they really take the time, to say what they what they feel. But if you make open meetings [...] and say, we have this project. Come tell us what you think, [...] somebody who shows up are the usual suspects. Those who just want to say bad thing about a project” However, it was mentioned that by “involving by the heart”, then people will show up.

FUTURE VISIONS

“I think, the way of thinking is that communities (municipalities) are turning more and more into involving the users who are going to use it afterwards because than they cannot blame us. If there is something wrong (with the outcome of the project).”

It was mentioned that the usage of IT technology could speed up the process of connecting to people. “To use it technology for bringing in involving people in another way is could be a new direction we are moving into.”

“The public are maybe less curious about what is going on around them, than people are more like, *Ah, that is not my business, that is not my backyard.*”

Similar to the Development Consultant, this worker seems to have some ideas of how to perform citizen engagement. And that is also because of his apparent close relation and speaking to the actual users of the sports facilities. However, the approach seems to be a bit uncommon, as the justification for the engagement is so the citizens cannot complain in the future about the facilities as they were “engaged” in the process. The idea that the citizen engagement is cumbersome is still alive in this interview and taking too many resources. That said, it is recognized that by engaging users, the outcome is usually much better.

The six interviews depicted how the processes regarding citizen engagement process differs from department to department as well as from employee to employee. Clearly, the last two departments have a better grasp of the need of hearing the public opinion for the development of projects. However, the majority

of the departments, or, at least, the people interviewed, need to shift practices and understanding of the purpose of citizen engagement and how the civilians can provide insights which contribute to a much better and well-rounded municipality.

Due to the amount of knowledge gathered from the interviews, we chose to add an extra step towards attaining the issues (regarding citizen engagement), which will be addressed. Therefore, key aspects of the interviews were used to develop an affinity diagram, to aid further the process of finding the most relevant issues to be addressed later in the thesis.

5.3. AFFINITY DIAGRAM

The interviews, previously presented, provided us with an understanding of the municipal employee's opinions on citizen participation concerning their specific departments, points of view, and their work experiences. Also, these interviews allowed us to gain insight into the previous practices in different sections of the organization. Moreover, this stage also allowed for investigation if the barriers faced by one department (or employee) were exclusive or shared within the organization. Since the objective of this chapter was to gather the main issues Gladsaxe municipality faces currently regarding citizen engagement, there was a need to extract the essential information from these interviews without losing its actual value. Therefore, following the scientific methods, the affinity diagram was chosen for us to understand the tendencies emerging from the interviews. In other words, pattern identification of tendency.

The initial process revolved in highlighting the main aspects of the interviews by selecting the most relevant statements for each of the municipality employees' conversations. The relevance of the statements is determined by the frequency of the topics, and if they relate to the information described in the previous sections. Once in possession of these selected phrases - linked to citizen engagement -, it was placed in an empty board where, by relocating the statements, tendencies emerged naturally, and then, later pointed towards the specific issues that needed to be addressed. This is done in the later chapters of this project.



Figs 3 - Interviewees' statements used in the affinity diagram (authors' illustration).

As previously described, these statements were rearranged in clusters in the affinity diagram. This rearrangement was a natural process as after the first iteration, we saw that some statements did not fit in where they were placed initially. Therefore, multiple rearrangements were performed trying to find the best and most appropriate place for the phrases - even though we understand that there is no correct place for the statements. At one point, there was a clear division of the statements into two main areas - called *Things to Solve* and *Secondary Statements*. The former refers to the issues to be addressed by this thesis, and the latter were statements that proved to be more inspirational for our final suggestion. These statements were valuable information to be used in chapter seven. In some senses, these phrases were more reflections from the municipal workers towards better citizen engagement.

Issues to be addressed

Communication

When you do not engage people properly, you can easily end up with a lot of complaints/appeals

Bad at communicating all the 'good' stuff the municipality is doing

Important to know who and where the decisions are made

Resources

Facilitation is resource demanding

Time is a main factor for involvement

It is resource demanding

Involvement takes time

It's a matter of knowledge, time, risk & consequences

Challenges engaging citizens

Are they interested? (Citizens)

Citizens who show up -not the "relevant" ones

It is hard for people to dream about solutions

Troublesome to get people to participate

Youth is very hard to engage for a long time but very creative

Do not know how the citizens should help us (municipality)

It is hard to get people to participate, only the "usual suspects" who complain a lot

Public opinion tends to be ordinary

Internal change

Visions and acknowledgements

We want to open as much as possible, but it just gets too complex

Learn to work differently, hold back when we think we have the expert knowledge

Learning how to facilitate

The Challenge is to find the right project to use the resources

Many roles as a civil servant

Move our way of thinking towards partnerships instead of citizen involvement

The balance between facilitator and authority

The tack of packing your expertise away and listen

Internal challenges

Engagement is a muddy process

When citizens saw the amount of work they had to do, many stepped down

Doubt if citizens will take part in this strategy (green transition strategy)

In the past, engagements were in the end of projects – sort of checking boxes

Difficult to engage the municipality employees

PD is the last part to have time allocated for in the project timeline

They (municipality) really do not know what they are doing!

We need to collaborate across departments

Where should the facilitators be in the municipality?

Figs 4 - Issues to be addressed - Affinity diagram (authors' illustration)

Secondary statements

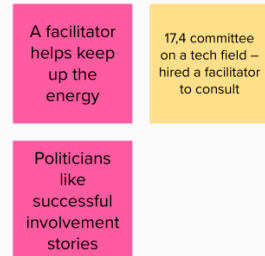
Successful experiments in Gladsaxe



Citizens role in the transition



Hired consultants

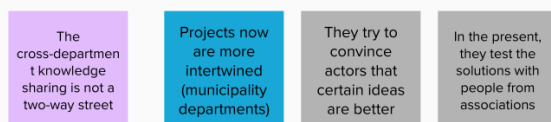


Successes in Gladsaxe

Current decision making approach



Current process of projects in Gladsaxe



Figs 5 - Secondary Statements - Affinity diagram (authors' illustration)

Thereby, the affinity diagram points us towards the following main issues regarding citizen engagement in Gladsaxe:

- **Engaging Citizens is Challenging** - How to gain the citizens' attention so they participate in the projects, and how to interest the right citizens.
- **Lack of Resources** - Citizen participation takes a lot of resources (time and money)
- **Internal Change (Visions and Acknowledgement)** - There is a lack of knowledge from the municipality employees on how to handle the citizen engagement activities.
- **Internal Challenges** - "Engagement is a muddy process", therefore, it is usually left as the last task in projects
- **Communication** - the ways in which the results of the participation (successes) are communicated are not properly done, if any at all.

Due to the scope of this project, as well as our abilities as Sustainable Designers, the *Communication* issue will not be addressed in the thesis. This decision is partly based on the statements within the Communication cluster being vague with merely three statements. In addition, this is out of our expertise. Thus, we chose not to address the topic. On a different note, the *Internal Challenges* issue can be related to the *Internal Changes*, as there are many commonalities such as how the municipal employees deal with unknown knowledge about challenges and problems regarding citizen engagement. For that reason, these two areas will be addressed as a single issue, where the solutions found for one will necessarily address the other - in an umbrella-scheme format. Therefore, the final issues, in which the next chapters will draw inspiration and provide suggestions, are:

- **Engaging Citizens is Challenging**
- **Lack of Resources**
- **Internal Change and Challenges**

Before concluding this chapter, it is vital to relate the final issues with the knowledge gathered from the overview of municipal development and the analytical perspective sections (chapters two and three, respectively). Since these chapters point towards problematic areas found throughout researches and fieldwork - lack of and the necessity of citizen engagement for municipalities -, it is important to connect and corroborate our findings with the ones from the literature. In the following, we present the summary of the main problematic areas citizen engagement faces based on the literature research and theories:

- Lack of open communication between actors to foster the social innovation.
- Citizens are willing to participate, however, the current process is not ideal.
- Some civil servants are under the impression that citizen engagement is cumbersome (time, and money resources). Therefore, in general, they have low enthusiasm for this type of process.
- The civil servants role and competencies will have to shift towards a facilitator role, welcoming and planning for co-creation.
- There is a lack of will to empower the citizens and reduce the civil servants and politicians' power - the power dynamic needs to change.

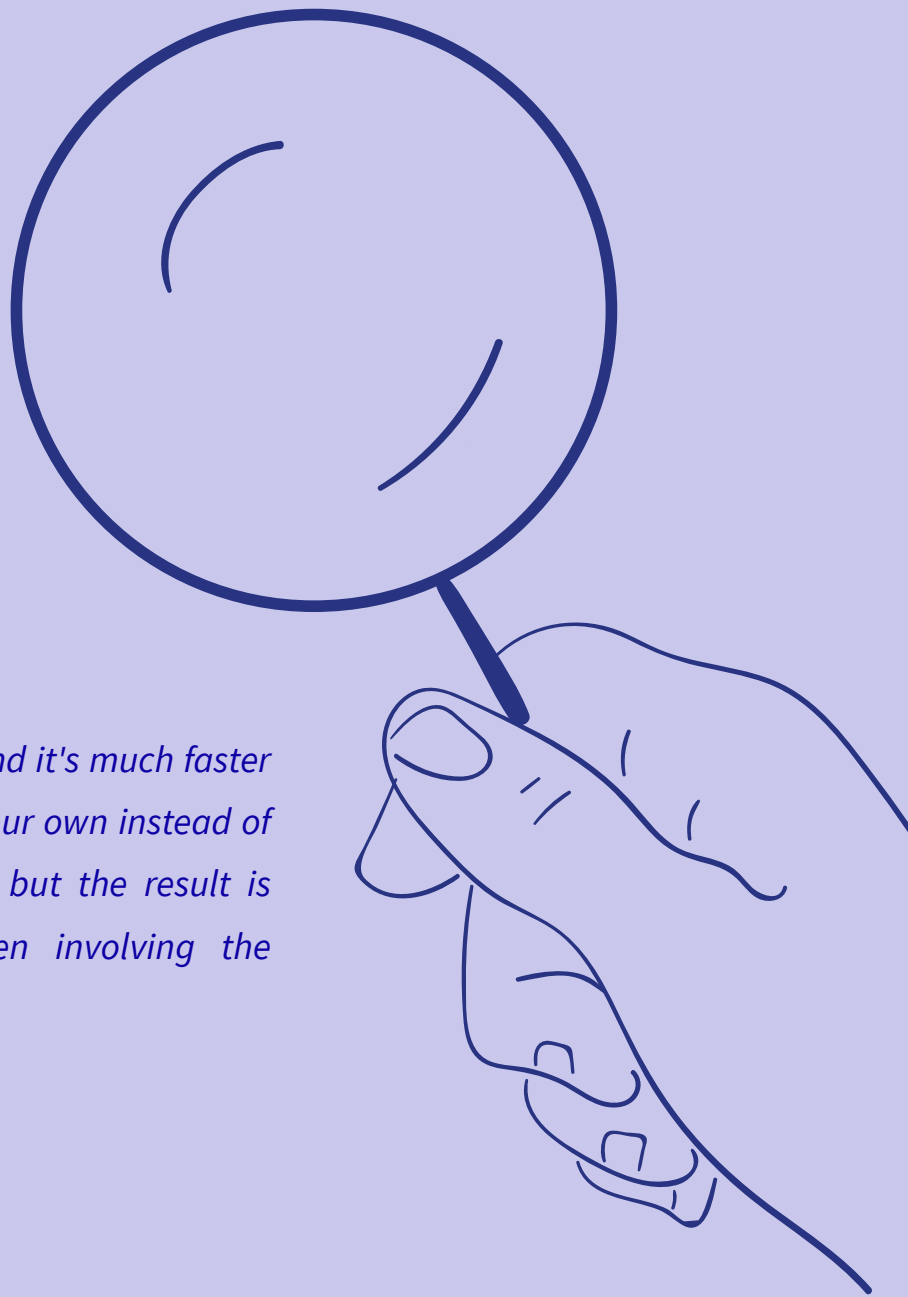
It is evident that the issues raised during our interviews and identified with the affinity diagram are similar to the problem areas the literature overview and theory chapters revealed. For instance, the lack of open (and transparent) communication and the process not being ideal refers to the issue of the citizen engagement being challenging; as most of the processes seem not to be properly documented and with the lack accessibility to those participating in the engagement events. The impression of the engagement being cumbersome and requiring much more resources is very much aligned with the issue of lack of resources found in the affinity diagram; as both argue that too much time is required to perform these engagement as well as to process all of the information acquired in each workshop. And, finally, the need for a shift in the civil servants' competencies and the power dynamic clearly are internal challenges and areas which need to be addressed in order for the proper citizen engagement to happen. The civil servants do not see themselves as properly trained to facilitate the citizen engagements. Some of them, concomitantly, are not willing to let go of their power status to citizens, where these "newcomers" would then decide alongside these employees about the future of the municipality.

The empirical data gathered throughout these interviews and narrowed down through the affinity diagram showed that even though the good practices of citizen participation are available (chapters two and three), there is still a lot of work to be done for the municipality to have the needed citizen engagement. As well as for the municipal employees to accept this (new) way of work. Thus, in order to solve the issues unraveled in this chapter, we seek inspiration in cases of citizen engagement.

INSPIRATIONAL CASES

“Involvement takes time. Yes, and it's much faster to do a fast decision or know your own instead of involving the users afterwards but the result is very often much better (when involving the citizens).”

Manager of the sport facilities



6.INSPIRATIONAL CASES

In this chapter, we present a selection of inspirational cases that aim at solving very similar issues as the ones presented in the previous chapter, only from different municipalities and circumstances. The chapter is divided into three main sections - each addressing the key issues previously described. Within each section, three external cases are presented. The active choice of selecting three cases (for each issue) was made because these are inspirations that should be tested in the municipality. Moreover, the amount of inspiration to be found nationally and internationally is enormous. Therefore, we have focused on cases that describe what the municipalities consider as successful projects and where they have developed solutions in a Danish or Scandinavia context - the reasoning is to enable an easier transfer of results to Gladsaxe.

In each case, for ease of reading, we chose to structure it into the 'problem' (where the article problematic is described), 'process' (their investigative process of the problem and the steps the researchers took to infer and address the issue), and 'output' (which is the proposed solution). In the end, a conclusion is presented as to how these inspirational cases could help us develop suggestions for Gladsaxe.

6.1.ISSUE CHALLENGES ENGAGING CITIZENS

In this section, we look into the issue related to the challenges in engaging citizens in different municipal activities. In other words, how to gather the citizens' attention so they participate in the projects, and how to interest the correct citizens. These challenges and inspirations have been addressed by Agger (2010), Viña (2011), and Agger (2011), which are described in the following three sub-sections.

6.1.1. DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

PROBLEM

The article's efforts lie in the attempt to address how local authorities can (try to) solve sustainable issues with the engagement of citizens on a bottom-up approach instead of the top-down scheme. As it is widely known in the research field, top-down approaches usually do not have a successful and long-lasting outcome. Thus, there is a need for a more suitable form of engagement, where the citizens should see themselves both as part of the problem, yet more importantly, as a part of the solution.

PROCESS

In the article, Copenhagen is chosen to be the case study because, at the time of publishing, the municipality wanted to be the leader on how to achieve the Danish Agenda 21, which is based on the UN efforts to promote sustainable development globally. That said, the article explains that for citizens, it is difficult to relate to how their acts can impact the global scale and future generations (Læssøe 2007). Therefore, many shy away from engaging with public authorities in relevant actions. More than that, the usual top-down

approach which municipalities use does not seem to resolve the problems in the long-run. However, the paper uses Copenhagen as a case to explain how to turn it around and promote citizen engagement, in other words, the bottom-up approach, where the local government is in close collaboration with the citizens and local organizations. The article explains that they studied local organizations that were in close collaboration with the local networks and municipal projects. Three neighborhoods were used as case studies – Nørrebro, Bispebjerg, and Sundby. The data came from multiple interviews of different actors – civil servants, citizens, local organizations agents, and others.

In the article, three different actions are proposed to address the Copenhagen engagement approaches. These approaches helped achieve a broader range of citizens and not only those particularly ‘interested citizens’ (Agger, 2010), who are certainly in most public events. The objective is to expand the networks by promoting different actions.

OUTPUT

The knowledge developed in the article argues for three different ways of expanding the engagement (and retaining) of different citizens of many backgrounds. They are:

Network Approach: The suggestion is for participants to actively participate in already existing local networks and “to initiate new horizontal and vertical networks” (Agger, 2010). But more than that, it is suggested to contact other local networks which may not necessarily be part of the central idea of the project – to expand into new horizons. It is argued that these networks are responsible for increasing the participants’ knowledge on the issue being debated. The article suggests that the introduction of ideas on how practices can be done towards such issue is a start. In addition, by using the active citizens as a starting point to expand the network, where they can be seen as “spreading the seeds” towards new actors which could be interested in participating in the projects being discussed. The article calls these actors as the Ambassadors of the networks.

Integrated Approach: The strategy relies on the integration of the topic in discussion – sustainable development – with other “policy areas” (Agger, 2010). In other words, the approach is to connect one or more areas with the main focused area (sustainability for this article). This brings it closer to the citizens and local networks, and one could argue that it becomes more relatable and attainable to these citizens. With this approach, it is mentioned that knowledge can be distributed to a wider range of municipal networks, and per consequence, a more holistic view of the issue being discussed can be achieved with the engagement of different networks. On the other hand, the “silo mentality” (Agger, 2010) present in some networks can become a barrier.

Canvassing Approach: This approach was suggested towards citizens who are not “considered as particularly interested” (Agger, 2010, p.548) in the issue being studied. The article says that this approach needs to be actionable and linked to events which these citizens already participate. For instance, it was mentioned that

to link environmental events to cultural activities are a great solution for engaging the busy citizens (Agger, 2010). However, these initiatives are suggested to be to the point and concrete, “with a visible outcome in order to attract citizens who want to do something” (Agger, 2010, p.549).

6.1.2.THE FOUR LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

PROBLEM

This case article address how citizen engagement could be better performed by the usage of design strategies. Moreover, it illustrates how different levels of participation – motivational, physical, intellectual and emotional could lead to a better engagement and possibly retainment of the participants. To help make the arguments more relatable, a perspective is drawn upon a real case called ANIMATO in Turku, Finland, where the objective was to redesign urban public places with the engagement of citizens. This case shows how by placing specific triggers – panels, words, pens – in specific places with an intent, it can help with the engagement, and more than that, it can lead to very resourceful information without committing to long-lasting actor engagement. Another characteristic of such method relies on storytelling as a form of conducting people to engage and participate on these types of interventions.

PROCESS

The objective of the design intervention proposed by this article was with the intent of understanding how the city dwellers see their own municipal area and how they could aid the transformation of it by providing with their inputs. For this information to be gathered, the researchers proposed the implementation of three different stands with multiple magnetic panels and other tools such as markers, shapes and words printed in magnetic material which could then be combined into more elaborated information. The researchers argue that there was an initial moment of learning and adapting, where the actions with the stands and boards were not the desired outcome. In the following days, they adapted questions which were relevant to the topic studied – these were placed on the boards. From that moment on, the citizens provided their own visions and answers to the question without intervention of the researchers – even though they were observing the reactions at a distance.

OUTPUT

During the periods of observation, the necessity of providing tools which allow for “free form of participation” was seen (Viña, 2011, p. 237) where the participants are not limited by the tools which are used. In addition, the tools used to conduct the experiment of engagement needed to be attractive to the citizens as well as having some sort of questions which guides them towards the scope and objective of the engagement proved to be relevant. Other relevant aspects were that the interaction between the actors needs to happen in creative spaces, where playfulness is stimulated and where the abundance of information is accessible and important.

The researchers conclude the article with the “four levels of participation” scheme. And a description of what triggers each stage as well as in which design dimension it should occur. The first level is the Motivational – which is triggering the citizen’s curiosity by a spatial form, material or other element. The second level, Physical, is triggered by the experience relating to the functionality and playfulness of the artefacts present in the physical space of interaction. The Intellectual is the third level, which is related to learning, in other words, it related to what is guiding those citizens to participate (questions, phrases, and the work of other dwellers). This level is achieved when content is developed by the citizens (Viña, 2011). Lastly, the fourth level, or Emotional level, is relatable to the sense of belonging. “When a person participates and creates content, one can say that s/he has reached the emotional level” (Viña, 2011, p. 238). As Viña states, when these four stages are achieved, by the development of a proper and thoughtful user engagement, then the participation is much more beneficial and productive.

6.1.3.ADDRESSING THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF CITIZENS

PROBLEM

As stated in the beginning of the article, there is an urgent need to engage the citizens due to their wealth of knowledge and understanding of their cities, which are becoming more and more complex and multi-leveled (Agger, Sørensen and Torfing, 2007). However, the simple matter of downloading the responsibilities (Julier, 2011) to citizens and transforming them from simple consumers into co-creators (Gaventa, 2007) also brings other layers of challenges such as the issue of representation. As stated in the article, those who tend to participate often have political know-how, time and professional knowledge ((Young, 2000; DeSanties and Hill, 2004; Fung, 2004b). In addition, as it is described before, the lack of a wider representation can exclude “certain voices, interests or people” (Agger, 2011, p2).

Even though power imbalances, according to the article as said to be unavoidable, there are factors which can help and induce towards a better and more well-accommodating participation. The need to understand the types of citizens – both who and who do not participate in public engagements – as well as how the participation happens are of extreme importance to tailor the engagements better in the future.

PROCESS

The article initially describes the types of citizen denominated by a body of researchers as active and disengaged citizens. Then, through an urban regeneration project, it explains different cases where the citizen engagements were problematic based on observations and interviews with the participants of each of the various engagements – committee meetings, steering boards, and operational programs.

The article addresses mainly the active citizen category (containing the Expert, Everyday Makers, Social Entrepreneur types of citizens). Initially, it states the issues in participation which the Expert citizens brought to the events, where they felt the need to overrule the other participants and planners based on their position and knowledge. And therefore, many facilitators felt the lack of training on how to deal with these

citizens. On the other hand, the everyday makers posed a different type of challenge – maintaining their interest. It was argued that they tend to focus on specific projects, and the heated discussions with the experts can be a turn-off to them. Lastly, the social entrepreneur category is said to overlap with the two previously mentioned, and therefore, suffers from the same problematics already presented.

OUTPUT

Throughout the article, it is explaining how the different categories of citizens behaved and their problems, and solutions to overcome these issues were also presented. For instance, for the expert citizens, it is suggested the need to create (and make explicit) the boundaries and rules for participation in the project; develop an environment where everyone has a voice. To achieve that, rounds of discussions – where all actors speak – is an important part as well as to break the entire group into smaller sets for discussions.

As for the other types of citizens, the planning of the processes and the creation of multiple milestones where these actors can see the progress of the projects is said to be of importance. Another aspect mentioned was the necessity of making the projects relatable to their daily lives. In that sense, they feel more related to the project and its solution.

For all actors, it was mentioned the importance of acknowledging their participation and contributions to the projects.

Lastly, the importance of crafting well-thought-out participation of each individual event is of extreme importance, since it lets the facilitators understand those who will be present, the goals of the engagement, and how information can be constructed with the essential and necessary tools.

In closure of this first issue, we understand that the first article provides inspiration on how to expand frontiers towards engaging with different citizens and how, by engaging different networks, the municipality could achieve a longer and wider reach towards those unknown and not attainable citizens. Also, it suggests how to maintain the level of participation by developing events that are engaging to the citizen, and the outcomes are attainable to them. Moreover, the second case addresses how to attract and, in some ways, retain the citizens through the engagement. It is mentioned the need to have spaces that are inviting to creativity to be developed, more than that, the tools available should not be the barrier of the work to be done nor to the citizens' creativity towards the desired output. In addition, the open access to information regarding the project and its outcome is vital to building trust, for creativity to flow, and for commitment to the project. Lastly, the last case contribution lies in developing a categorization of citizens to understand how they usually behave both in participation activities and in the city. This understanding allows for better engagement where smaller rounds of discussions would address the 'trying to overrule' Expert citizen. At the same time, by providing the scope and the goal of the project, it makes the Everyday Makers and the Social

Entrepreneurs more likely to stay in tune with the project until it is finished as it provides a sense of purpose and motivation.

Indeed, these concepts, ideas, and tools could be implemented in Gladsaxe, but the recommendation at this stage is that experimentation is fundamental. Not all the boards, magnets, and tools used in Turku necessarily would work in Gladsaxe - it could, but, as said, experimentation is vital for all of the case inputs.

6.2. ISSUE: RESOURCE BARRIERS

In this section, we draw inspiration from cases which address the conception that citizen engagement is resource-intensive - monetary and time-wise. Therefore, it is avoided whenever possible. The inspirations on how to address this miss-concept are done by Dalsgaard (2010), Whittle (2011), and Johansen & Pedersen (2019). The three cases are described in the following sections.

6.2.1. STRUCTURING LARGE PARTICIPATION PROJECTS

PROBLEM

This article addresses the issues and challenges intrinsic to large public projects regarding the participation of different actors, and how different approaches to participatory design can help the development and foster of such works. The case-study is the Mediaspace Library in Aarhus and how it was developed with the engagement of citizens.

According to the article, the main challenges of citizen engagement in large projects are related to; how to engage a heterogeneous group of actors, how to maintain the activities relevant to the project and to these actors, and the implementation of scaffolding participation – a new method described in the article. Moreover, it is argued that because each nation, each dwelling has its own socio-cultural norms, it makes it challenging to create a comprehensive set of rules to be followed by the facilitators, but even so, some guidelines are still possible to be developed as these are presented in the article.

PROCESS

From the early stages of the creation of the Mediaspace in Aarhus, actor engagement has been part of the process. Project management, stakeholders, citizens, architects, and others have been engaged in citizen participation to various degrees. The paper took part in observing the methods of how these engagements were done. Throughout the building process of the space, multiple events and processes took place regarding participatory design, ranging from public hearings to inspiration card workshops, and living blueprint – a more custom work done for the project – as well as ‘voices of the city’ idea. The Inspiration Card Workshop (Halskov & Dalsgaard, 2006) is a process where design concepts are created by citizens, designers, and other actors regarding a specific domain. The living blueprint was a collaborative effort to envision the future of the building in the sense that with small personas, ideas for the building, and how the interior would

be displayed could be tested as well as opinions could be discussed at the moment. The voices of the city, on the other hand, was an approach where a table set up with screen and microphone allowed the actors to engage with different aspects of the project, record their opinions regarding specific aspects of the building as well as hear other who have left their opinions as well. Therefore, it was a buildup of knowledge.

OUTPUT

The first point the article brings is the fact that from the starting point, all actors engaged (including the citizens) should be addressed “how the process is organized, who the stakeholders are, and how to influence it” (Dalsgaard, 2010, p. 27). As the article states, it is challenging to maintain citizen engagement in a longer project. However, to counterbalance this situation, it is recommended that the relevancy of the project is explicit from the beginning, as a North-Star for the actors to visualize the outcome. It is a matter of bringing relevancy to them.

Another aspect is what is named as ‘scaffolding’, which is used as an inquiring tool where through the dialogue that each participation workshop brings, new instruments can be “developed to facilitate a process of inquiry and, at the same time, it comes to guide what aspects of the process are explored, thus shaping the ongoing process” (Dalsgaard, 2010, p. 28). Through this approach, the engagement of the citizens could become more robust as this process connects them with the process of engagement and the evolvement of the project itself.

6.2.2. LEAN CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

PROBLEM

This article, in essence, tries to answer the question of how much engagement is good enough for a project. To achieve that, the authors use six different cases in which they examine the different participation processes, in relation to the outcomes obtained. The article challenges the idea that more participation is always better and generates better results. The issue with these long approaches is that the costs and amount of time (as well as other resources) also increase, which, in most cases, is never good, especially with public resources. The paper argues that the main problem is that the process of participation has become the main focus and not the goal of the project. In other words, participation should be a method to achieve the project outcome and not make it the central part of the work being developed. Therefore, the paper discusses the relationship between the depth of participation versus the outcome of the project.

PROCESS

In order to assess this relationship, the researcher, during a period of two years, monitored six independent projects related to the development of digital technologies, which aided the promotion of social change. These projects were not required, at the start, to use participatory design approaches, but all ended up doing so in different versions and depths. Due to the fact that all of these projects were done within the framework of a university, they all had academics and students engaged in different projects. However, the type of

leadership varied. Some were co-led by academics and the external actors; others were led exclusively by the academics, and two other projects were driven only by non-academic related actors.

For the article, the author developed a table with all of the six projects, the types of actors engaged, the types of participation practices, the score on participation, and the outcome of the projects. Analyzing the information, it becomes clear the tendency that some projects became side-tracked by the overload of engagement and thus could not achieve as much of the outcomes as other projects with a leaner approach towards the engagement and which adapted the engagement acts as the project went. These methods, consequently, allowed the lean projects to accomplish much more in terms of outcome in relation to the former projects.

OUTPUT

Based on the summary table and the conclusions of the author, it is agreed with other researcher (Balka, 2010), that the outcome of the project should always be visible to all those engaged with any participatory project. When a project has different objectives, the outcomes for each objective should be laid out initially. Another aspect delivered by the article is what it is called 'an agile participatory processes', where the team working on the project is constantly evaluating the project, its performance as well as of the actors engaged. Thus, the agile principles could also be a good procedure to evaluate how much participation is enough in each stage and for the overall project.

Lastly, this approach of lean management, is said to combat the 'team bloat' (Whittle, 2011), as only the necessary actors are included in the project. In addition, it also means that through the continuous evaluation, actors can be brought in or out of the project as it may see fit for each task. Therefore, this approach help manage and reduce the expenditure of resources such as time, money and people.

6.2.3.PARTICIPATION IS WORTH THE RESOURCE DEMANDS

PROBLEM

This case differs from the previous articles presented as it is based on a Master Thesis for Urban Design from the Institute of Architecture & Design at Aalborg University. In this manuscript, they investigate a different method of citizen engagement through the usage of online video games as a participatory tool for the development of Budolfi Square in Aalborg. Their argument lies in the fact that the current citizen engagement tools are relatively old in relation to the current standards and thus ineffective in engaging the younger population, but more importantly, it is resource demanding.

PROCESS

The project followed the structure similar to our thesis, where it first laid the claims of the current (classical) participation to be undesired, excluding people, and time and money consuming. These affirmations are backed by the literature research – which is the part of interest for our thesis. Then, the study is followed by the understanding of the current citizen engagement in Aalborg - including the usage of Facebook as a tool for public hearing; that is followed by the research and understanding possible available games that could be used to citizen engagement. The process continues to the testing of the claim with actual users and the final round-up of the thesis in conclusion that this ‘e-participation’ has a great deal of potential to reduce all of their claims of the current practices – including the one of cost and time demanding.

OUTPUT

Even though there are organizations both in private and public sectors claiming that citizen participation is costly and time-consuming (Cogan and Sharpe, 1986; Marsh, Molinari, and Trapani, 2013), that proves to be inaccurate. Through a body of researchers, it was argued that this claim is not necessarily valid, as the resource consumption is firmly attached to the way these projects are conducted. In addition, it is argued that “in the long run, both economic and financial gains from time-saving can outweigh the initial losses caused by allowing discussion of the project” (Johansen, A. G. and Pedersen, C. B. 2019). Moreover, the argument is that effective citizen engagement can certainly achieve “reputational gains and better quality of results quickly recuperating losses of the participation process” (Johansen, A. G. and Pedersen, C. B. 2019, Marsh, Molinari and Trapani, 2013, pp. 297–298)."

In concrete terms, they argue that the distribution of information regarding the project should be ample and, to a certain degree, limitless, for those participating in the project as well as the need for adequate communication. That is because, the lack of proper dialogue could lead to the necessity to “redo pieces of design where feedback was collected too late” (Johansen, A. G. and Pedersen, C. B. 2019, p. 18). Another aspect mentioned regarding the discussion of ideas was that argumentation should not be suppressed. The reason is that if a theme is not thoroughly discussed, there are chances that in the future, this topic will need to be reassessed and renegotiated. Therefore, proving to be a time-waster (Johansen, A. G. and Pedersen, C. B. 2019). The argument is that the constructive use of resources should be the mindset instead of continuous argumentation and fighting. Lastly, it was argued that there is a need for the public sector to trust the citizens and share all and the necessary information related to the project, which “can significantly reduce the time consumption in the public process” (Johansen, A. G. and Pedersen, C. B. 2019, p 19).

The first article is about the development of Mediaspace in Aarhus and builds upon different tools that were used to bring citizens (and other actors for that matter) together in the development of the future building. These tools and the open sharing of information across the board has helped the project by keeping the discussion process opened as well as maintaining the actors engaged throughout the entire process. Therefore, through investing in proper tools prior to the engagement, it seems to explain the reasons for the

smoother engagement process for all parties engaged. The second case, on the other hand, addresses how more project participation is not necessarily better, on the contrary. By engaging what is called 'lean participation,' it is argued, and corroborated by the six sub-cases studied, that having a clear goal for the project and what they want to achieve, as well as having a constant process of internal evaluation of the processes, it leads to better engagement of the users. Moreover, because it lends itself to engage and disengage citizens as the project may see fit. From these arguments, we would also argue that this process probably keeps the actors much more focused and engaged. Lastly, the thesis addresses that participation, if done properly, is not necessarily cost and time-demanding. It all depends on the communication between the actors engaged in the process. It is claimed that all the project information should be fully available to those participating. In addition, discussions should be allowed, but not to the point of fighting - it needs to be constructive. The level of trust also needs to be ample. Lastly, explicit knowledge of the scope and outcome of the project needs to be available at all times. By employing these tactics, it is argued that time and money can be employed wisely and be in any way wasteful.

6.3. ISSUE: INTERNAL CHANGE AND CHALLENGES

For this section, we draw inspiration from cases addressing the internal challenges the municipalities have regarding engagements. In other words, the lack of knowledge from the municipality workers on how to handle citizen engagement activities. The inspirations come from three sources Center for Innovation in Aarhus (2016), Competence.hub (2020), and Danish Architecture Center (2014), and are presented in the following sections.

6.3.1. SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW TO LEAD PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION

PROBLEM

This publication is developed for municipal workers in Aarhus as an accessible guide based on learnings and recommendations from 28 innovation projects within the municipality. The publication focus on leadership, the organizational aspects in all stages of a project, and provides insights on how to support innovative, engaging processes in their municipality. Moreover, it breaks down the process of a project into before, during, and after. Giving a much-needed overview of how to build and navigate in these types of projects. Due to the fact that it takes its outset in previous projects. Many of the advice given will be based on known challenges and ways to avoid or prepare for them.

PROCESS

In order to provide clarity on how to initiate innovation projects, it is constructed as a step-by-step guide, advising on familiar wonderings and challenges, which we also came across when conducting interviews such as: how do we ensure that the right actors are enrolled in the project?, How do we collaborate successfully across agendas?, how should we share and spread the knowledge, and How to lead?.

An innovation project should be seen as a change of culture, habits, behavior, and therefore, ownership is essential for the success of a given project (CFIA, 2016). In order to do so, a municipal project should incorporate, and preferably, engage the people affected in any means of the project. This could be numerous actor groups such as civil society, employees within municipal departments, and businesses. Hence, it is highly advised to see and use them as helpful partners, ensuring that the solutions will be value-creating. The guide acknowledges and addresses typical concerns such as a project leader stating that the pressure of acting as an ambassador, a confident project lead to the outside, while not knowing the outcome or value of the project can be tricky. The preparations are, therefore, a valuable and necessary way to make a plan and decide the aim of the process: How should it be evaluated? Who should take ownership internally? And what is the overall approach (CFIA, 2016)? Furthermore, a central aspect is also to create concepts and prototypes to be tested, preferably by the people, the solutions are aiming to help, and refined based on the gathered feedback.

Much innovation is driven by passion, which, in many municipalities, it also opens up to some unaccustomed vulnerability. A way to turn this into a strength is to consider which strategic partnerships could make the project more robust, whereby, answering the question of who are the right people to be engaged? (CFIA, 2016). The right people are the ones enhancing the project, challenging the status quo, or simply thinking differently. Inviting experts into the project is one way of doing this.

When managing these processes, decisions will be made, and changes will happen, the documentation of important milestones of a project is, therefore, essential both in the project and afterward to evaluate and learn from previous experiences. The collaborations across departments can seem complicated and overwhelming, and, consequently, it is crucial to be aligned initially on everyone's agenda and incentives to succeed.

OUTPUT

Conclusively, this guide provides suggestions based on relevant projects and advocate for a curious, inclusive way of driving projects. It pushed the status quo and advised for alternative practices, with hands-on experience. Combining it with the municipality's method catalog, Aarhus has created some noteworthy transparency. Surely, there is no easy fix to drive change, however, by innovating and adapting from previous knowledge, it provides a valuable foundation to be inspired and evolve from.

The output from this case can, in many aspects, be seen as similar to other forward-thinking publications on public sector innovation. Bason (2018) similarly stresses the need for rethinking the practices of problem-solving in every aspect.

“Placing people’s wants, needs and situations at the centre of the creative process is a powerful way to generate the insights that allows us to create with people, not for them” (Bason, 2018, p. 182)

6.3.2. RE-INNOVATION IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

PROBLEM

Komptence.hub, together with seven university colleges, conducted a case study with 15 municipal cases, researching how innovative public solutions could be re-innovated into other contexts using design as a mindset. They claim that many resources go into creating new products, services, and practices, which, with some alternations, might be fruitful to be inspired from. The contribution of this publication is, therefore, an analysis of how to: Discover and select innovation solutions created in another context; Readjust the solution, so it benefits your context; Mobilize the solution, and ensure that the right people take ownership.

PROCESS

The fifteen municipal cases are essentially chosen because they are very different. The consistent feature, however, is that they all are experiments in how to spread innovation from one situation to another or bring something from a centralized to decentralized. The cases highlight six important competencies to possess as a driver for re-innovation, which are:

- Sensibility
- Communication
- Relations
- The ability to shift perspectives
- The ability to priorities
- Perseverance

Sensibility competence is about daring to be curious, playful, and explorative. It is about seeing the potential in people and situations, be open-minded, and acknowledge other perspectives, experiences, and contributions. One should provide space and time for initiatives, and one should see themselves as a motivator, keeping up the spirit, and also be willing to explore the unknown (Kompetencehub.nu, 2020).

Having communication as a core competency allows one to articulate visions and make the participants feel comfortable in trying out new tools, models, prototypes, etc. It is necessary to be explicit about the framework so it is clear what is expected from all participants, and what they can contribute with and for. Change can be a complex manner, and clear communication both inside the working group and to the outside can reduce the resistance that might occur. Third competence is relations, the ability to build strong relations is a significant driver for change. Building or engaging communities to participate and create a narrative that motivates using a shared language to articulate the visions. This will help keep the momentum going and motivate them to engage in the process.

The ability to shift perspectives is the fourth competence, and it stresses the crucial skill of continuously navigating between the practical and concrete, and then the abstract and reflective. This leads to the next skill of how to prioritize. When re-innovating, you do not start from scratch, that is one of the key values of this approach. This provides elements which can be reused, but also elements that will need rethinking, and testing. The responsibility is, therefore, to make sure there are enough resources to customize the solution to make it an asset. The public sector has limited resources, and many other projects and agendas would like more of the same resource. Therefore, during a project, transparency and showing the value and momentum is key. Maintaining the focus of the larger changes and being patient is essential for the solutions to be mobilized.

OUTPUT

Based on these briefly described competencies, it indicates some of the changes needed to succeed in balancing between being a facilitator and an authority. It indicates what type of social skills are needed to lead innovation processes and the need for empathy-based on fifteen case examples from Danish municipalities.

6.3.3. EXPLORATION OF BARRIERS WITH CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

PROBLEM

In 2014, DAC decided to investigate whether the current citizen engagement processes could be carried out differently to better accommodate the complex planning processes many municipalities face today. The organization held three workshops on citizen engagement to provide a place for the debate to get a greater understanding of the current framework and the barriers these engagements might have. The findings from these workshops were put into use and tested in three case examples from Odense, København, and Holbæk.

PROCESS

The first workshop was conducted to explore the issues with the current ways of citizen engagement to shed light on what approaches could possibly need some alternations. This workshop was described as a small expert gathering, and together, they came up with five overall themes that either needed alternations or new ones that should be applied. These were: Earlier engagement, different approaches for different people, new municipal mindset, new planning culture, and handling of knowledge. The second workshop looked into what a good framework for a process would consist of. This was an open event with 75 participants, all contributing to how an alternative framework could be. The main findings were: less controlling, engagement in earlier phases, create a municipal engagement policy, and a platform for dialogue. The last workshop was also an open call with 75 participants, where they discussed how municipalities could enhance a new planning culture proactively working with engagement. The themes in this workshop took its outset from a bigger perspective, such as raising the question innovation or democracy, how to engage actors when the

process is unknown, how you should expect to be resistant, and how to go from being authoritarian to a community.

The cases described in the catalog focus on the learning perspective, and therefore, tried different approaches in various projects to understand the output. Odense municipality was undergoing a comprehensive transformation. A transformation they knew would not merely affect the physicality of Odense, but also the mental aspect. Therefore, engagement and ownership were essential if their project should succeed. The following recommendations came out of this project: the dialogue between the municipality and the citizens needed to be in equal levels, meaning that the power dynamic would need to be re-adjusted. Branding and documentation strategies should be aligned. This will mobilize the solutions and keep the citizens in a positive mood. And lastly, to make sure expectations are aligned, as it needed to be very clear what the citizens had an influence on, and what the municipality was trying to achieve.

In Holbæk, the focus was on early engagement of young adults and let them co-define the issues and the solutions. This was done through walks, participation, and direct access to politicians and planners. This made the youth actively engaged throughout the whole project. The recommendations were, therefore, to dare to let the young adults take charge, loosen up the framework, and align expectations.

OUTPUT

This catalog provides some key insights as it both succeeds in facilitating the workshops where the issues and barriers become evident, and it also tries to experiment on possible solutions for some of the set issues. The key barriers discovered through the workshops by DAC correspond well with previously mentioned findings and is simply a verification of how the municipality's issues to some degree are comparable.

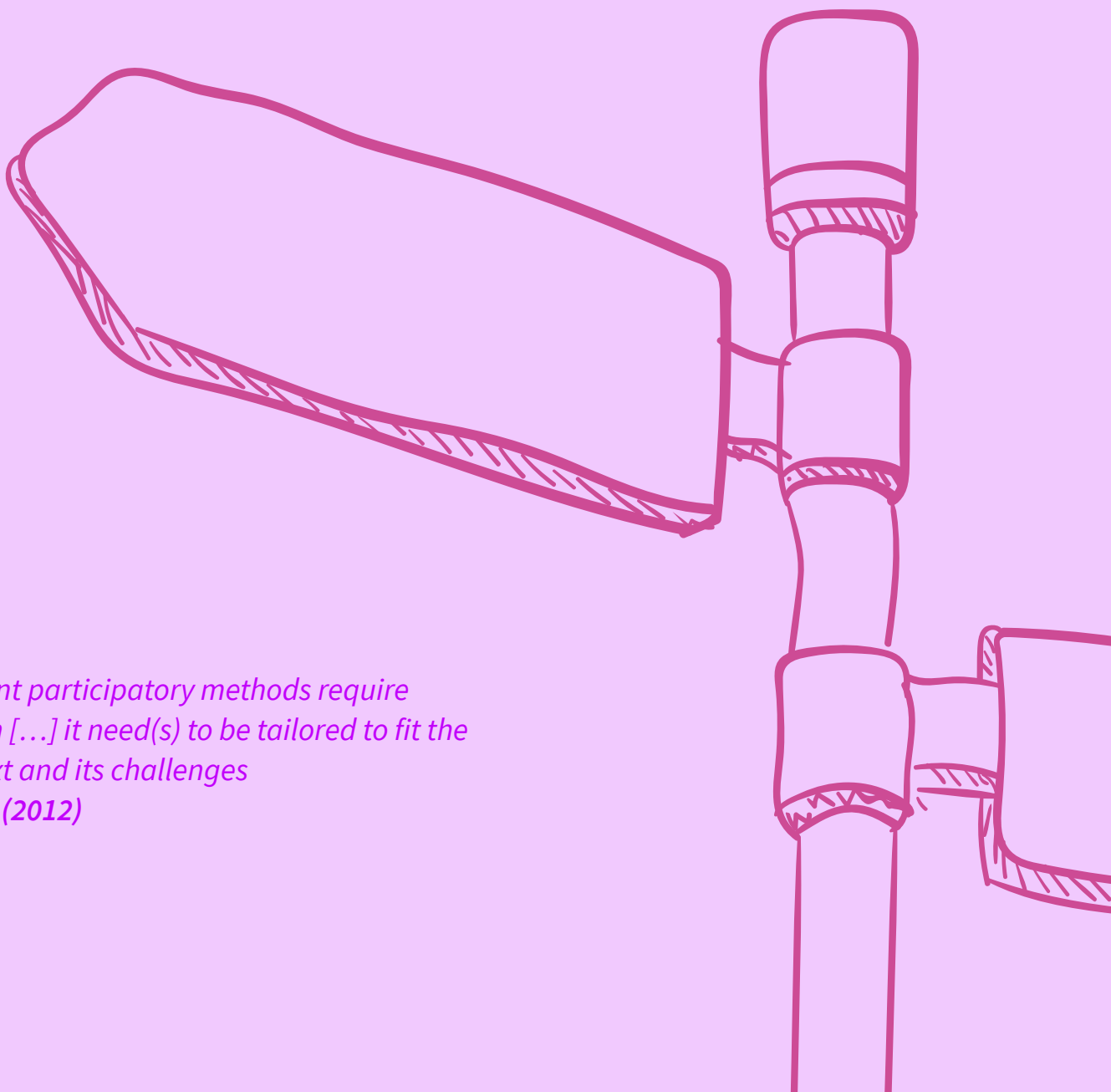
Conclusively the three cases presented for the third and final issue provided us with inspiration on how others have dealt with similar internal problems and possible solutions for these challenges.

First case exemplified through the format of an innovation guide how a municipality can turn the learnings of 28 completed projects into tailored recommendations for project leaders. Its strength was the committed focus on what competencies it takes to lead innovation processes throughout all stages and can be supported in practice with their method catalog as well. The second case was based on a study of 15 municipal cases, addressing how to re-innovate each other's ideas and alter them into your specific context instead of starting from scratch every time, which is resource demanding. Moreover, it described the social skills needed as a successful facilitator, valuable insights to learn from. The third case, by DAC, investigated in three workshops what the overall barriers are with citizen engagement. Their discoveries corresponded well with our findings, and it was, therefore, valuable to study how they afterward tried methods to solve those set barriers in two cases.

The nine cases presented in this chapter are study cases extracted from a large body of articles and catalogs. These are closely related to the three main issues Gladsaxe has regarding their methods of engaging citizens - engaging citizens is challenging, lack of resources, and internal change and challenges. The intent of this chapter was, then, to draw inspiration from studies that are somewhat related to these particular issues as well as being capable of shedding new light into what could be done differently in Gladsaxe to suggest different practices for citizen engagement. The purpose is, therefore, to move towards citizen engagement processes that are relevant and fruitful for the future of the municipality. Thus, the key takeaways from these cases are that by utilizing different approaches, the municipality can reach directly and indirectly citizens through the various associations and clubs. Also, by connecting with other policy areas, the project can gain the attention of those who were not previously aware of the engagement projects. In addition, the preparation for each engagement event, as well as for the overall project, is shown to be key for its success. Concomitantly, by having a lean-type of management, an overall view of the actions is always available, as well as who is engaged in the project and its processes. This leads to faster and more informed shifts in the project. The open dialogue, information transparency, and accessibility to all those engaged in the project seems to bring relevant results as the citizens see the importance of their participation in a project with delineated outcomes. Lastly, it was shown that learning from other successful projects, and adapting its elements to the municipality's projects is relevant. Thus, reducing the unnecessary consumption of resources as when starting from scratch, since others have walked the same path with sharable learnings to be used as inspiration.

In the following chapter, we, based on the previous case study, suggest ways in which Gladsaxe could perform their citizen engagement in different manners and, consequently, create an outcome that can be realized in the municipality.

SUGGESTIONS FOR GLADSAXE



*Efficient participatory methods require
design [...] it need(s) to be tailored to fit the
context and its challenges
Agger (2012)*

7. SUGGESTIONS FOR GLADSAXE

The inspirational cases presented in the previous chapter exemplified how issues similar to the ones identified in Gladsaxe (chapter five) could be addressed in a different approach. With that in mind, the intent of this chapter is to extract the valuable insights from the cases presented and tailor them to Gladsaxe. In addition, we go one step further to present two pragmatic ways in which the municipality employees could utilize the information in practicality. In order to achieve such a feat, first, we divide the inspirations (gained from the previous chapter) into two categories (Mindset and Practical). The former is related to the organizational - the back spine - aspects, where the management and preparation for the engagement workshops are key. The latter - the front layer - is related to how the interaction with the actors is done as well as how the information regarding the projects and engagements are presented and stored. In addition, we re-introduce the 'secondary statements' gathered in the affinity diagram (chapter five). The objective is to acknowledge good practices already in place in the municipality as well as to enhance the final suggestion.

By analyzing all of the elements of inspiration previously gathered, it was understood that these concepts would not work in equal ways during the different stages of the engagement processes, nor would all of them be used at the same time during the engagement periods. We could see that some of the concepts would be more adequate in the preparation and initial phases of projects, while, some, would be more relevant throughout the process but not necessarily in the beginning. In addition, we understood that more than this separation, some concepts were necessary in the managerial level (or Mindset level) - to oversee the evolvement of the engagement schemes - whereas, other concepts should be placed in the Practical level. This level represents the items which were concretely applicable in the events of engagement. With that in mind, however, some of the concepts are both present in the Mindset and Practical levels.

Both levels are presented in the next two tables. These tables provide an overview of the concept, which issue it intends to address, the Idea (the general intent on how it can help the municipality address the issue), and the Output (what is gained from using and applying the idea). In a secondary stage, a final recommendation is disclosed, where the ideas and outputs are organized into two concrete and applicable solutions.

MINDSET

CONCEPT	ISSUE	IDEA	OUTPUT
Integrated Approach	Challenges Engaging Citizens	To integrate the topic of the engagement with other policy areas.	To have a holistic view by engaging with different citizens, thus making the discussion richer and well rounded.
Lean Approach	Resource Barriers	A constant evaluation of the processes and progress of the projects. Allows for better understanding of where resources are being used and who are the participants of the events.	The constant way of processing information and actions allows for better understanding on how much participation is necessary at each stage of the project as well as other resources.
Learn, steal & adapt	Internal Change and Challenges	The ability to gather others' good work and tailor it to a specific project and context.	Learning from internal and external successes, and mistakes are valuable ways of designing for future municipalities. Re-innovating what has worked in other contexts, and make the adjustments needed with the needed mindset can be fruitful.
Open dialogue between actors and trust in the citizens capabilities	Resource Barriers	Information is readily available to those relevant to the project. In addition, the facilitators could work with the municipal workers in trusting the citizens by showing that they are capable of making informed decisions.	Trusting citizens leads them to take full responsibility in the project, where transparent dialogues would be prevalent and issues resolved through. Thus, there would be a need to revisit older items, therefore, reducing consumption of resources.
A guide through all the phases	Internal Change and Challenges	It covers an understanding of how to plan the process, the mindset needed to facilitate, what methods that have proven useful in the past, and stresses the importance of what should happen after the project has ended.	It provides an understanding and transparency of what is necessary to take into consideration on an organizational level.

Table 1 - Mindset Level

PRACTICAL

CONCEPT	ISSUE	IDEA	OUTPUT
Network Approach	Challenges Engaging Citizens	Using the already active participants in the projects to reach out to other local networks to gather more citizens.	A different approach using active participants of projects to reach a wider network of people.
Canvassing Approach	Challenges Engaging Citizens	Engage with citizens who usually do not attend engagement workshops - in places and events which they go daily - such as parks, markets.	There is a bigger change of exposing the project, its ideas to citizens who do not participate in regular municipal engagements. Perhaps, now s/he could with this exposure.
Tools, guidelines, information is key to attract and retain citizens	Challenges Engaging Citizens	Preparation prior to the future events. We would argue that even staging some of the events could help envisage problematic points which could be addressed before the citizen engagement events.	Providing the adequate tools, proper and stimulating surroundings where the projects happen, as well as abundant information and guidelines regarding the scope of the project to help attract and retain citizens.
Knowing the different types of citizens	Challenges Engaging Citizens	Understanding how the citizens are organized, and their overall behavior, helps to construct engagement processes which enhance citizens participation. It can also help solve dilemmas as well as avoid moments in which the project halts.	By understanding the spectrum of citizens and how one should respond and relate to them provides a powerful knowledge to be carried during the engagement events. It fosters better dialogues and avoid unnecessary confrontation.
Rules of the game are explained	Resource Barriers	Open access to information as well as open dialogue should be policies for these citizen engagement acts. And the outcome of the project needs to be explicit to all participants.	By having open access to information regarding the project, all actors know the goal of the project and the tasks. Thus, reducing the expenditure of time with unnecessary and over-and-over explanations.
Open dialogue between actors and trust in the citizens capabilities	The same as in table 1	The same as in table 1	The same as in table 1
A guide through all the phases	The same as in table 1	The same as in table 1	The same as in table 1

Table 2 - Practical Level

These tables provide an overview of the main ideas and outputs we draw inspiration from, which combined with the knowledge of *the secondary statements* from the affinity diagram (chapter five) will motivate the final recommendations for Gladsaxe.

In the chapter five, the affinity diagram resulted in two areas: “*issues to be addressed*” and “*secondary statements*”. The first has been addressed in the previously. However, the secondary statements still need to be brought into our suggestions as it embeds knowledge coming from the municipal employees, which has been put into practice and, in our perspective, are relevant to the solution.

Nonetheless, the “secondary statements” can be summarized into three themes which can be coupled and addressed for the goodness of the suggestions.

- “The cross-department knowledge sharing is not a two-way street” and “Projects now are more intertwined (municipality departments)”
- “Citizens are seen as add-ons when Gladsaxe sees fit” and “See the citizens as co-creators”
- “Everyone needs to adapt and take part in our new agenda” and “Citizens & businesses are expected to adapt their behavior regarding the strategy”

Firstly, it can be seen in the affinity diagram that there are some obstacles with knowledge sharing across departments, even though it has been stated by the employees (Project Leader) that the projects now are more intertwined. A possible improvement to the cross-department lack of sharing (ideas, and project outcomes) would be to have an internal knowledge sharing component which could create and enhance this share-ability in between departments augmenting transparency and providing a catalog of inspirations.

Secondly, there is a discrepancy in how citizens are seen by the different departments. Some employees see them as add-ons, whilst, for other employees, the citizens do play a part in the projects. That said, it is unanimous that they know citizens should be seen as co-creators. In addition, reflecting on the overall opinions of the six interviewees, it was evident that the employees with engagement processes as a significant part of their work, naturally, had a better understanding of engagement because their work is in much more close contact with the municipal dwellers. On the other hand, the office employees – distanced from the citizens -, tend to describe it as a more cumbersome process. We then concluded that there exists some inconsistencies from these statements. It speaks to the fact that citizen engagement processes in Gladsaxe varies considerably from project to project (based on the interpretation of the interviews). Concluding, we argue that the suggestion should contemplate a more coherent way of engaging citizens in projects.

Lastly, Gladsaxe, no different from any other municipality, is developing strategies and agendas which ultimately affect how citizens and businesses act. It is expected that these actors can and will adapt to the changes strategies are requesting without necessarily being engaged in the development of these strategies. Both statements speak to a top-down approach most municipality have. We would challenge this approach based on the gathered knowledge from municipal employees insights, literature overviews and the inspirational cases. Citizens should to take part in the sustainable transition. They should be engaged, empowered to take ownership, and make the effort to change the top-down behavior.

After presenting the summary of the inspirational cases and how it would provide suggestions to citizen engagement in Gladsaxe, in addition to the addressing of the three secondary statements, we have developed another level of the final suggestion. One which is much more applicable and transferable to the municipality and its employees. With that in mind, we present the final recommendations

7.1. FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

This pragmatic recommendation is developed in two instances. The first one is the Knowledge Platform and the second one is a Project Management Tool. Both inspiration from the Practical and Mindset levels previously presented. These recommendations are presented separately for didactic purposes, however, the two can be certainly be used in conjunction and interconnected. It is also relevant to state that, for the success of the Project Management suggestion, further understanding of the organization, how the culture is developed and the role of management is needed. Nonetheless, it is still a valid recommendation.

7.1.1. THE KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM

This project's research indicates that there is a need for a coherent and concrete form of sharing knowledge internally and externally in the municipality when speaking of citizen engagement. The objective is to distribute information regarding engagement projects. For internal use it would be ideal to share how successful projects were developed, what learning were gained, what tools are available for forthcoming project, etc. On the other hand, for external personnel (including citizens and local businesses) it would be used for sharing information regarding specific projects where those folks would be participating. Therefore, improving the transferring of information and possibly reducing time expenditure on communicating project related data.

The knowledge platform, would be a virtual space, much like a database, where relevant information about projects are be located and accessible to municipal employees, citizens, local businesses, and other related to specific engagement projects.

The idea behind the knowledge platform is to combine the following elements:

- An archive of finished projects - Described in a manner that enables others to get a sense of the problem, the process and the goals of the projects.
- A shared platform for internal learnings specifically revolving around citizen engagement cases, successes and mistakes to be learned.
- An overview of clubs and associations where citizens could be approached to engage in events, workshops and projects relatable to municipal engagement.
- An index of inspirational cases, from other municipalities and cities nationally and internationally.

It is important to note that concluded projects on citizen engagement, good practices and inspirational work from other municipalities are currently not easy accessible.

Previously, it has been stated that citizen engagement is a complex and resource demanding task. The database, however, could help reduce its complexity by providing a list of clubs and associations which could be reached to build up a network of citizens and other actors whom would be able to collaborate and assist the engagement projects done by the municipality. Not to mention that it would possibly increase the number of participants in these events which are engaged by interest. Thus, solving the issue of only the “usual suspects” (mentioned by the Sports Facility Manager in chapter five) appearing for the workshops and complaining about the project and the solutions.

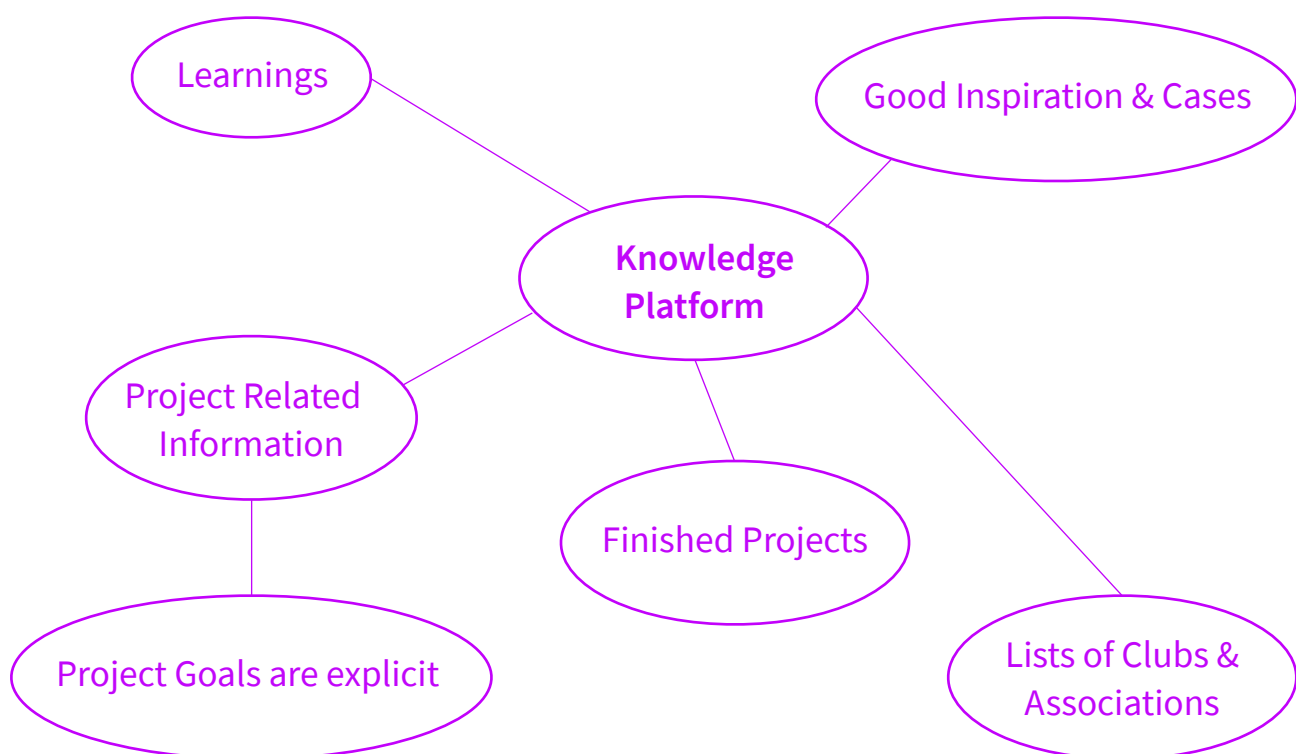


Fig. 6 - The content of the Knowledge Platform (author's illustration)

The knowledge platform is also thought of as the starting point of re-innovation. As one of the inspirational cases describes, the ability to be inspired from previous projects (in the municipality or externally) and tailor it to a new project can be a valuable way to build upon and improve how citizen engagement processes and workshops are done. Therefore, designing for a sustainable future.

7.1.2.PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOL

The second suggestion to Gladsaxe, which is based upon the two tables with the summary of the inspirational cases and the “secondary statements” - from chapter 5 -, is presented as a managerial way of administering the projects, its processes and the minor components which are used in the events. This approach is envisioned to be utilized by the facilitators and municipal workers in the development, creation and the different stages of the engagement processes.

Within this approach phases of the project are recorded, all actors engaged in the project (at the different stages) are listed, as well as which part of the project these folks belong. Additionally, the final goal of the project is stated and always available for consultation; but more than that, it is used as to measure the progress of the project, and to keep the evolvement of the project in alignment with the desired outcome. This approach tends to reduce the expenditure of time and money (in agreement with “Resource Demanding” concepts). Lastly, this tool allows for an overall view of the materials, tools and other items necessary for each of the steps and stages of the engagement project to be available when necessary. This overview also contributes to improving the usage of resources and enhances the quality of the work being performed.

The Project Management Tool provides a better understanding and audit of the status of the project at all times if done properly and kept up-to-date. It is not a simple task, however, it certainly can pay dividends in the long term as all of the steps and decisions taken are mapped out, who was involved and who will next be engaged is declared and the outcomes for the project are clear. In addition, it is argued that this managerial tool is complimentary to the “Knowledge Platform” as it makes it easier to input the projects information - recorded from the management tool - into the database. Consequently collaborating to the evolvement and enrichment of not only the platform but also with the learning which could be transferred to other future engagement projects.

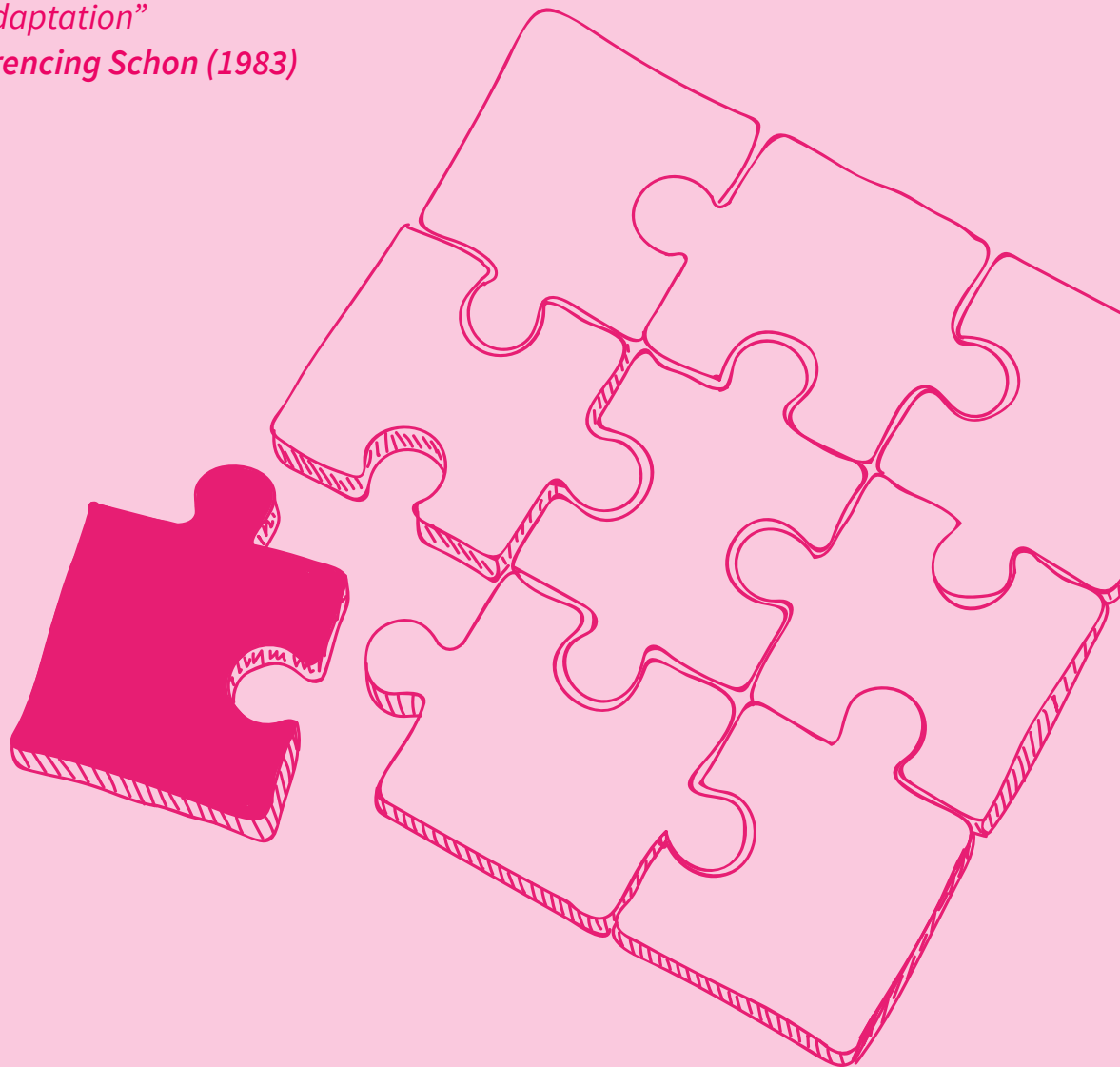
Concluding these proposed recommendations for Gladsaxe would, naturally, need to be initially tested to understand what issues may arise and potentially not being addressed by these suggestions. In order to gain this type of knowledge, it is suggested that an engagement event would be the next appropriate step. In this instance, citizens and businesses as well as the municipality (and its relevant employees) are engaged to test the proposed suggestions' validity and effectiveness small engagement project. This approach would provide a better understanding of the suggestions, how they work. In addition to getting accustomed to it, this initial engagement could provide feedback for further enhancing the suggestions and tailoring it even more to the Gladsaxe's purposes.

With these suggestions and recommendations in mind, we, the Sustainable Design Students, believe to have answered and fulfilled the research question by providing Gladsaxe with suggestions on how to approach citizen engagement in support of their visions within sustainability.

CONCLUSION

“A Participatory Design process is designed, and requires continuous reflection and adaptation”

Rosenqvist referencing Schon (1983)



8. CONCLUSION

The primary goal of this master thesis was to study the current practices within Gladsaxe's citizen engagement and suggest alternative approaches to support their visions within sustainability. For us, the sustainable designers, to answer this question, a systematic approach was used. We broke down the project into smaller tasks – mainly divided into the previous chapters – which, together, led to our suggestion of practices that could be adapted to the municipality's context.

In the initial phase of the project, the majority of time was designated for researching topics of urban development, policymaking, and participatory design. The objective was to gain insights into where the current knowledge and practice stands as well as in which niche there was an opportunity for contribution. By understanding the past and present, where it stands in relation to citizen involvement as well as what the trends were contributed to clarifying the overall picture of this type of engagement not only in Gladsaxe, but also in Denmark, and possibly, globally. In addition, reviewing different aspects of participatory design theory allowed us to understand which aspects were relevant and made sense to be referred, inspire, and applied in our final recommendations. Citizen engagement is not a trivial enactment, thus why many municipalities struggle to work with inhabitants. However, by understanding the opinion of the actors involved, their points of view and perspectives, it helped us infer where issues are present as well as where new suggestions could be implemented. And that was the next phase of the work.

The following stage was the gathering of data. Due to the circumstances, our access to the actors was somewhat limited (COVID-19 lockdown). However, it did not completely stop our progress and contributions. We were able to communicate with different people of a multitude of departments in the municipality. Most of the interviews were done virtually – by either video or audio call. Regardless, these talks gave us a better understanding of how citizen engagement was done in the past and in the currently (prior to the pandemic) – if any, at all –, what were their personal and department perspectives regarding having citizen engagement, and how they saw the future for the municipality regarding working alongside their inhabitants. As described in this thesis, the opinions varied significantly, as well as their perception levels of what citizen engagement meant. One crucial aspect, in our perspective, is however that Gladsaxe has the potential (and willingness) to increase the engagements with its inhabitants.

The interviews – which were the only point of contact with the actors – served as the entry point to the analysis phase, where, by creating profiles of the interviews - the most relevant and mentioned opinions regarding past, current and future views on citizen engagement -, we were able to extract statements, which later served as the basis for the affinity diagram created. The result of the diagram provided us with the main issues (engaging citizens is challenging, lack of resources, and internal change and challenges) that the municipality has had regarding engagement. With that summary of information, it was relevant to compare

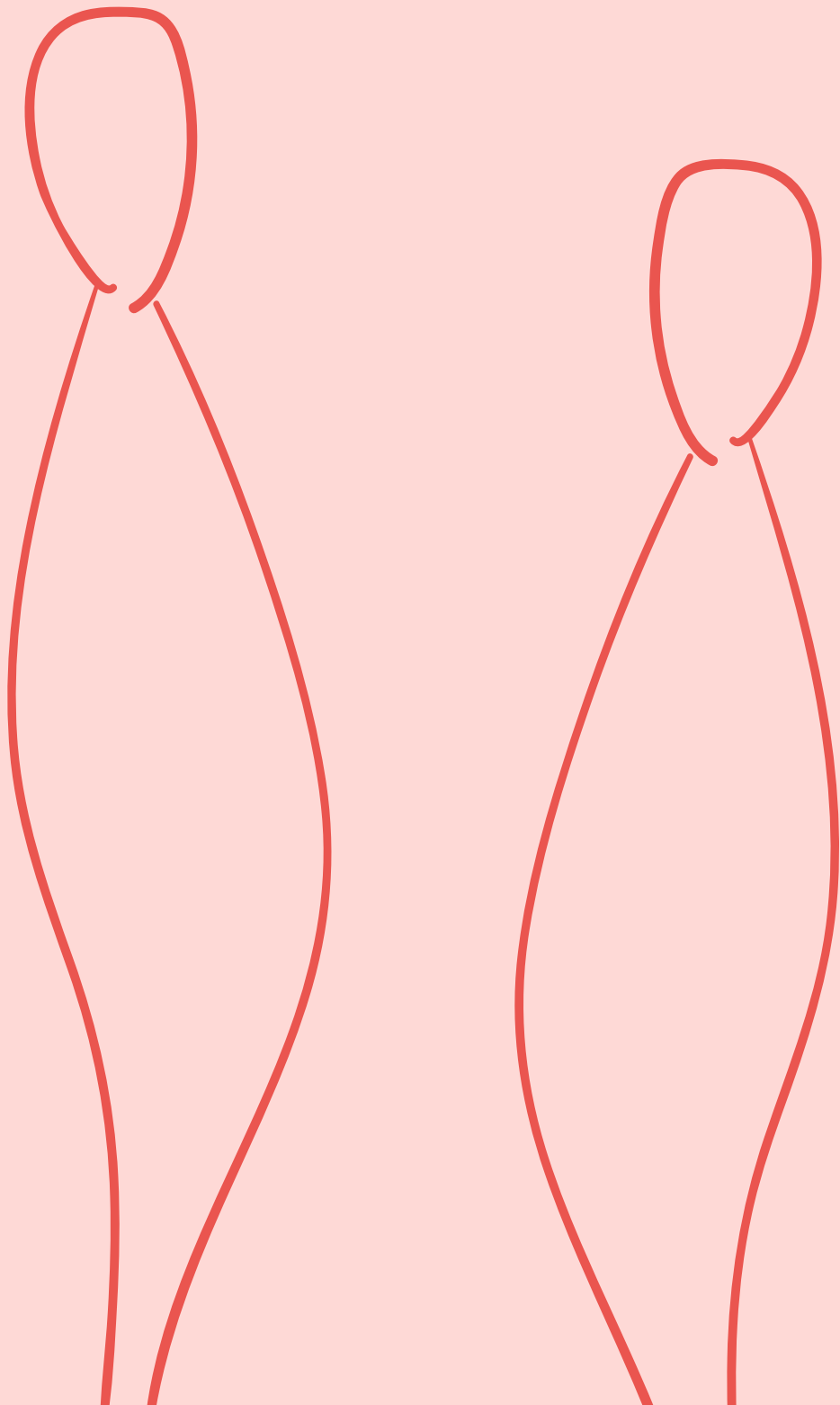
these issues to the previous literature overview and theoretical perspective. The objective was to visualize any types of patterns which could aid in the following phases or if we were totally out of alignment with the external researchers. For that matter, the issues in Gladsaxe were aligned with the body of research. The next step was, based on the issues found in the affinity diagram, to perform a second literature review this time looking for inspirational cases which could help provide suggestions to Gladsaxe's issues. After a lengthy period of reading and reviewing, we found nine potential cases that could collaborate in addressing these aforementioned issues. For each inspirational case, we withdrew specific points – such as mapping the type of citizens, open dialogue between actors, lean participation, etc – which could most likely collaborate for the future solution.

The “Suggestion for Gladsaxe”, namely our solution, presented how each of these extracted points from the cases could collaborate with the municipality to ameliorate their citizen involvement. More than that, in this chapter, we also included specific points which were mentioned in some interviews and that were already used in silos within the municipality, but we thought that could be expanded and shared across departments. Lastly, in order to leverage the suggestions, we described approaches in which the municipality could concretely accustom these recommendations into their practice. This form of answering the research question and presenting the suggestion to Gladsaxe was done in this manner, as, due to the global pandemic, we were not allowed to test these concepts in the real world. Therefore, the next step, which should be performed by the municipal workers, is to test and adapt our recommendations to the forthcoming projects in municipality pipeline. From there, adjustments can be tailored to foster their citizen engagement processes.

Regarding the contribution of this thesis to the Sustainable Design research field, it is clear that, by investigating the past and current practices of citizen engagement (participatory design at its best), promoting the engagement itself, and certainly improvements in this area by combining different aspects and knowledge from distinct researches into new and applicable methods, we argue that this thesis is enhancing how participation and citizen engagement is seen, and also collaborating in changing the stigma it has regarding it being time and resource demanding and not worth it. Nonetheless, the advancements promoted by this thesis, could, and should be applicable to other municipalities. But a word of caution is necessary, as the suggestions were tailored to the specific municipality of Gladsaxe. Therefore, we propose that others should be inspired by these suggestions and customize it to their very own and specific cases – which should be done with small experimental tests. Lastly, it is important to mention that this body of work is not permanent. On the contraire, we would like to see it evolve. Thus, we suggest that new and updated papers with suggestions of best practices on citizen engagement should be added to this thesis and continually improve and refine the proposed suggestions.

REFLECTIONS

*“It is never the case that you
first know and then act, you first
act tentatively and then begin
to know a bit more before
attempting again”
Bason (2017)*



9. REFLECTIONS

This section serves as a retrospective consideration of the thesis, its strengths, its limitations, and a glimpse into our thoughts of what the next phases ideally would be like if the research continued. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have not had the opportunity to investigate our chosen field as thoroughly as we expected, and thus it created some unexpected restraints which we address in this chapter.

The project has been framed by six interviews with employees from various municipal departments. All of them have first hand experience in some of the most interesting and visionary citizen engagement processes within Gladsaxe. These interviews, alongside with the literature researched throughout the thesis, helped to understand what were the major problems the municipal workers had when engaging with citizens in their municipal projects. In addition, the comparison of their issues with the literature available showed that the problematic were common to municipalities.

During this process, we learned that Gladsaxe, as most municipalities, say that their engagement processes are established. However, when speaking to the different employees (and through our own research), it was made clear that citizen engagement is not necessarily well ingrained in their way of working. Even though, most of the employees argued that this type of engagement is relevant and would contribute to the municipality's future. By first understanding the municipality's perspectives and views on citizen engagement it allowed us a better understand of what needed to change and be improved. Consequently, we developed suggestions for an alternative participation practice. This solution was based on inspirations from a second literature research on inspirational cases as well as practices which some of the municipal departments had provided, and which were relevant contributions according to the literature overview.

In relation to the strengths of our approach to the solution of research question and the overall project, we argue that by structuring the process in the way it is presented, it was possible to get a better overview on where the literature stands in regard to citizen engagement with the lenses of urban development, policymaking and participatory design. This initial high-level understanding corroborated the finds from the interviews. The knowledge, then, served as a strong base for the development of the final suggestions on how Gladsaxe should re-think its participatory approaches. This process shows a firm connection between each of section of the project, leading to the final suggestions. In addition, the suggestions in itself is divided in to two levels - practical and mindset - which provides a wide range of actions the municipality could take and apply on its future participatory projects.

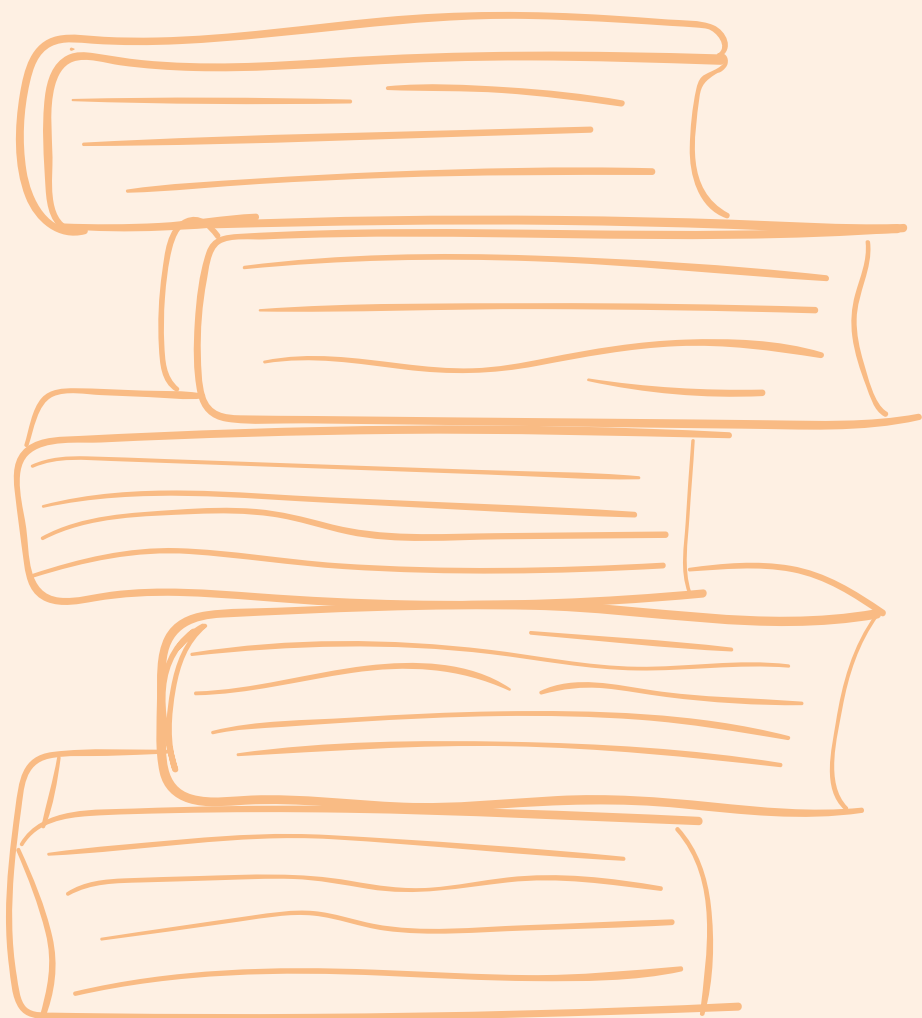
However, we understand that this project certainly has its limitations regarding the process to achieve the final solution as well as how it should be used in future applications. First, the different types of engagements with a wide range of actors, we initially thought, was not possible due to the already mentioned pandemic. Therefore, we had to base our empirical data on six interviews only, even though the interviewees were well

acknowledged in their fields of expertise. Still, it does not provide the fuller picture of how citizen engagement is performed in Gladsaxe. Ideally, we would have spoken to citizens from different neighborhoods, politicians, businesses and many other. All with the intent of enriching the body of knowledge we acquired. In relation to the solution, we have not being able to test it in loco. Consequently, we were not able to gather feedback on its applicability, suggestions and improvements by all actors ideally involved. This approach would most certainly have contributed to the enrichment of the solution and its success as a way for Gladsaxe to apply it to its methods within citizen engagement.

Despite these limitations, we are convinced that the suggestions provided by the thesis should be applied in Gladsaxe (as well as in other municipalities, with some adaptation). Although, we suggest that the implementation should be done in smaller-scale projects where testing is possible and with minor impact in the overall municipality. These test should also enhance the capabilities of these methods and tools as well as opening up for a discussion on citizen engagement.

Nevertheless, we do argue that our suggestions can contribute to a change that would ultimately have a positive impact on future projects in Gladsaxe municipality.

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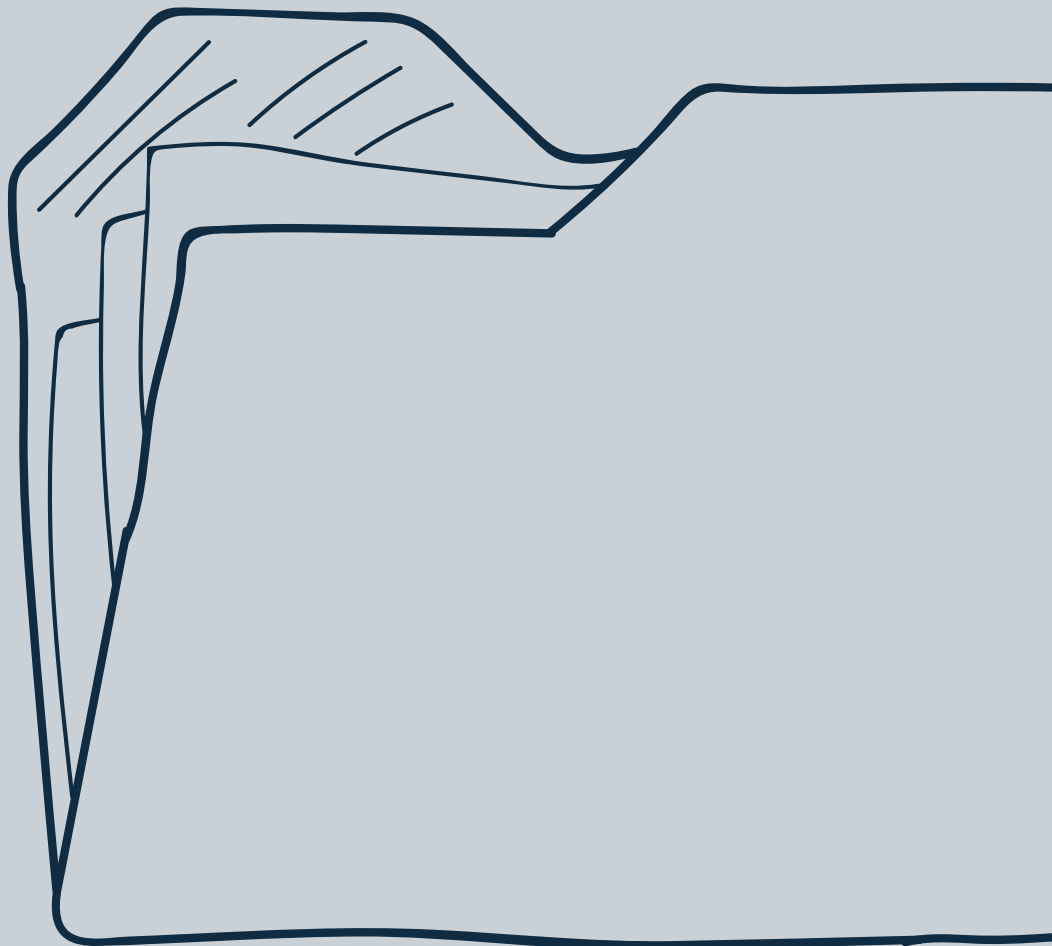
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APPENDIX



11. APPENDIX

11.1. APPENDIX 1 - INTERVIEW RECORDING

All of the six recordings for the interviews done with the Gladsaxe municipality employees are available at:

https://drive.google.com/open?id=1sA4A8A_9XpMuADdDRZVw1qTlVo69Up-P

Interviews:

27/02/2020 Jesper Interview

05/05/2020 Vibeke's Interview

07/05/2020 - Line's Interview

13/05/2020 - Katherine's Interview

14/05/2020 - Julie's Interview

14/05/2020 - Holger's Interview

11.1. APPENDIX 2 - INTERVIEW GUIDES

Interview Questionnaire for: Chief Consultant and Project Leader

- Background
 - Education
 - Work within Gladsaxe
 - Current projects
- Citizens
 - How are you engaging the citizens (current and past)? How has that changed over the past and now?
 - When are you inviting citizens in?
 - What value do you see in citizen participation?
 - What barriers is there when inviting citizens in a process?
 - Have you seen a shift in citizens in the way they participate? citizen-wise
 - What initiatives does Gladsaxe municipality have planned for the future in regard to citizen engagement?
 - What other municipalities do you look towards for inspiration?

Interview Questionnaire for: Strategist, Team Leader, Development Consultant (Libraries), and Manager of Sport Facilities

- Background
 - Education

- Past/Current

What have you previously worked on within the municipality?

What are you currently working on?

Do you have some sort of training/competencies to do the citizen participation?

How was the process of engaging citizens during the projects?

When were the citizens first engaged?

Are there any challenges regarding engaging citizens?

What were the values obtained?

What type of projects and when should the citizens be engaged? How do these decisions are made in the first place?

- What do you want the future to be?

What future initiatives are you planning? How are they gonna be done?

- Other

- What other municipalities do you look towards for inspiration?