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Organisational Resilience
CECAN

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- Largest independent consultancy focussed exclusively on delivering better public services

- Transform the way public services are managed, reflecting the complexity of the systems they operate in

- Improve outcomes for citizens, using public funds better, and leaving public services more resilient
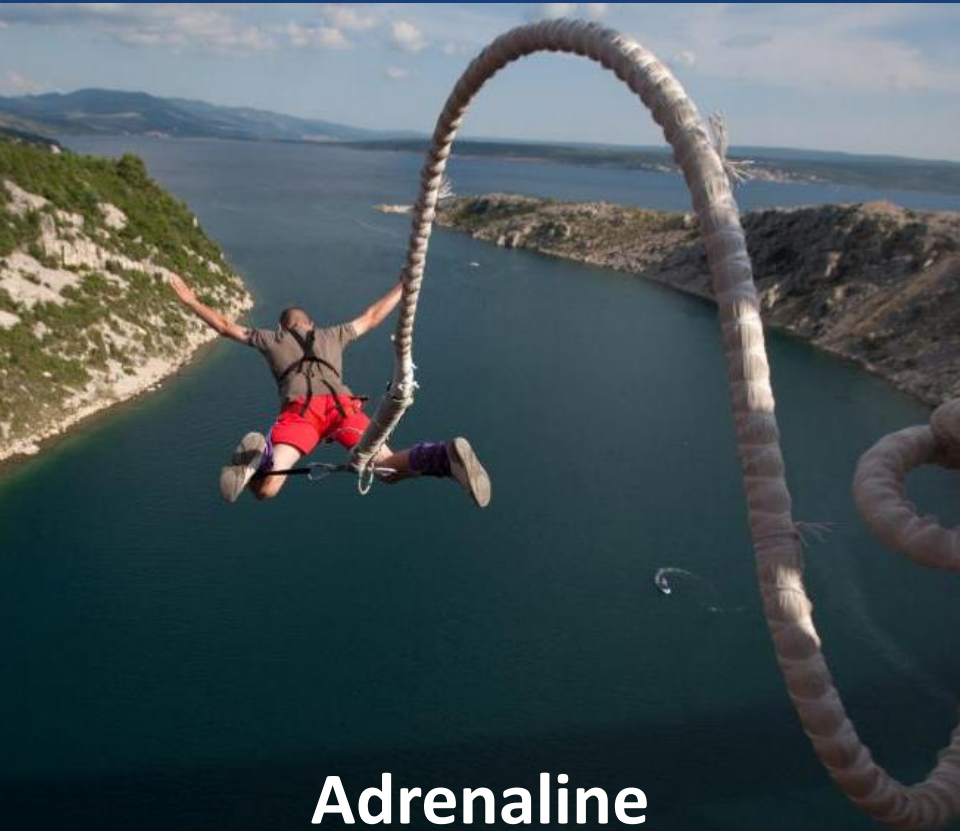
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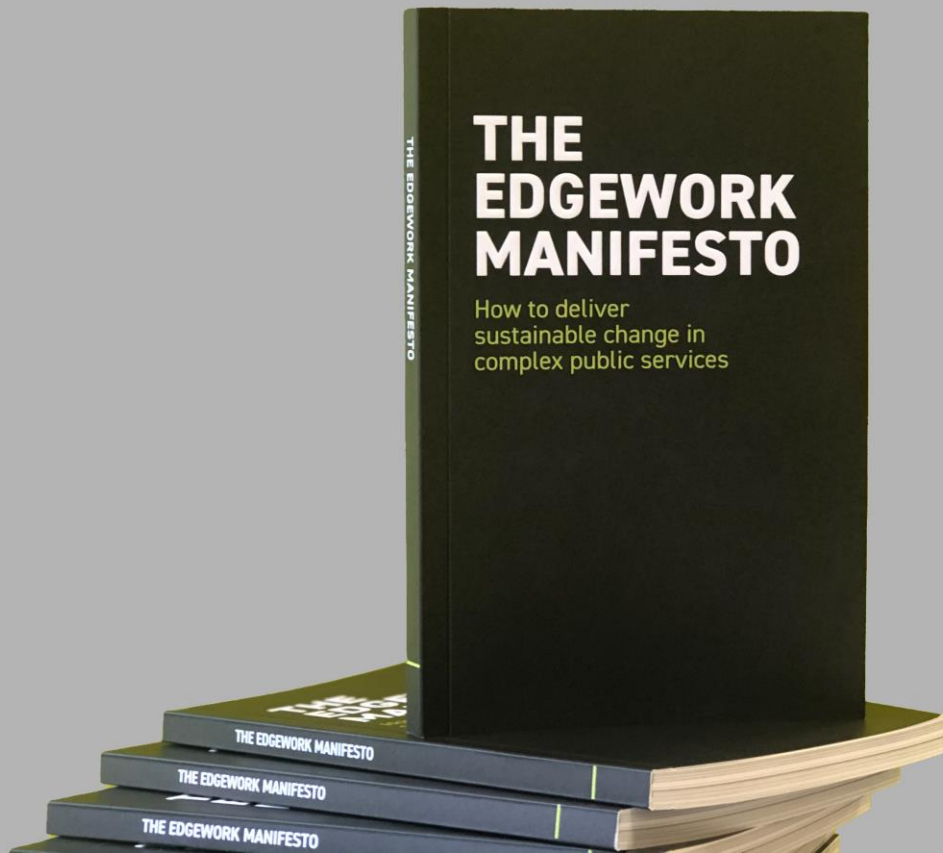
Disruption is part of the core business of a council given the uncertainty of complex systems

Organisational resilience is
the ability to anticipate, adapt to and
bounce forward from disruption

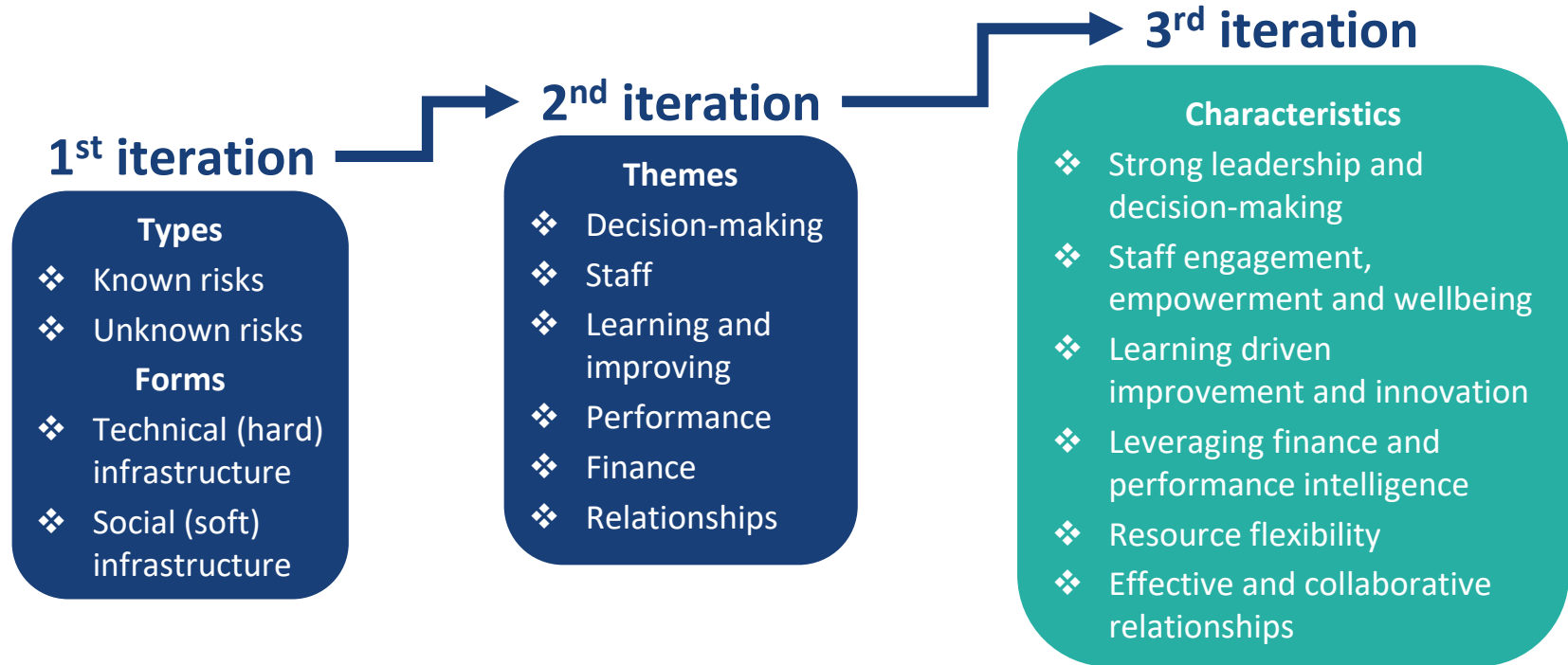# This is the difference between adrenalin and core strength

Adrenaline

Core strength

We've used a test and learn approach

1st iteration

Types
- ❖ Known risks
- ❖ Unknown risks

Forms
- ❖ Technical (hard) infrastructure
- ❖ Social (soft) infrastructure

2nd iteration

Themes
- ❖ Decision-making
- ❖ Staff
- ❖ Learning and improving
- ❖ Performance
- ❖ Finance
- ❖ Relationships

3rd iteration

Characteristics
- ❖ Strong leadership and decision-making
- ❖ Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing
- ❖ Learning driven improvement and innovation
- ❖ Leveraging finance and performance intelligence
- ❖ Resource flexibility
- ❖ Effective and collaborative relationships

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We now have a framework for assessing an organisation's resilience

Absorbative capabilities

Adaptive capabilities

Strategic capabilities

Characteristics

Strong leadership and decision-making

Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing

Learning driven improvement and innovation

Leveraging finance and performance intelligence

Resource flexibility

Effective and collaborative relationships

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Not just a pretty diagram!

Characteristic

Resource planning and flexibility

Effective and collaborative relationships

Characteristic

Learning driven improvement and innovation

Leveraging finance and performance intelligence

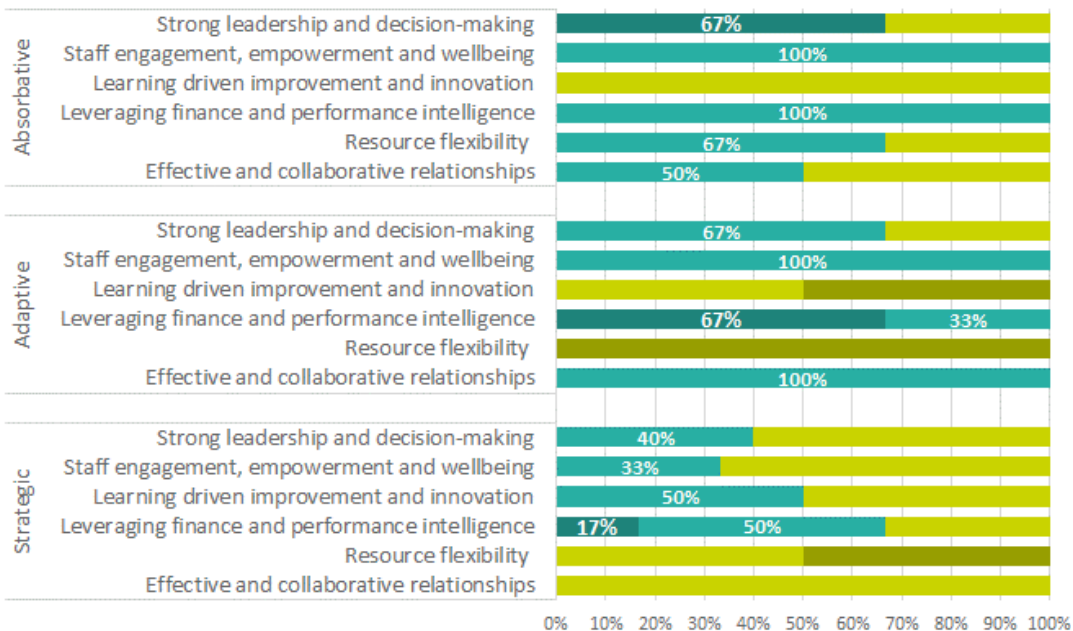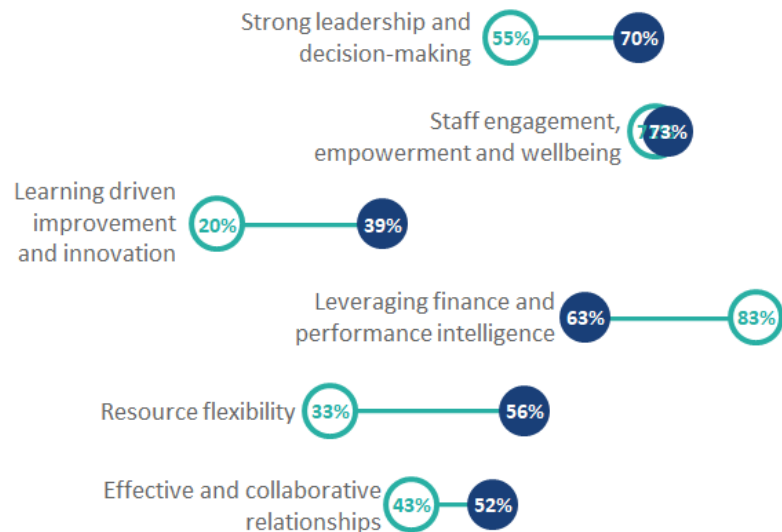| Characteristic	Indicators of absorbative capabilities	Indicators of adaptive capabilities	Indicators of strategic capabilities
Strong leadership and decision-making	• Competence in quick execution of contingency and business continuity plans to respond to disruptions • Governance processes are able to be flexed to enable a shock response, with people being confident in making rapid and difficult decisions and accurately judging the level of escalation required • Accepting that some BAU will be put on hold and some services not delivered in order to focus on responding to the disruption	• Competence in execution of contingency and recovery plans, balancing short and long-term priorities to circumvent disruptions in the longer term and aligning these with organisational goals • Ability to ascertain and make a decision on when to restart different BAU activity and when to stop disruption specific activity given the rapidly changing context and capacity, and being alert to when this needs revisiting • Ability to maintain supportive and constructive challenge at the senior leadership level	• Shared ownership, review and testing of contingency and business continuity planning and procedures, with an agreed understanding of the organisation's minimum operating requirements (planning strategies and stress testing) • Organisation-wide shared and owned understanding of strategic priorities (unity of purpose) • Governance processes use decision-making time effectively so high-quality decisions are made fast, at the right level, with empowered decision making, commitment to execution, and ownership of its impact • Ability to mitigate anticipated and predictable surprises / minimise potential negative consequences • Trust and respect has been built between officers and members • Leaders build truly collaborative leadership, and there is a sense of teamwork across the organisation, working together at all levels regardless of departmental boundaries (breaking silos)
Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing	• Ability to have regular 2-way engagement with staff being transparent about the disruption and showing gratitude to staff • Staff have a clear understanding of organisational priorities during a disruption • Ability to understand levels of well-being and well-being need • Ability to support staff experiencing physical and mental health problems or trauma as a result of a disruption	• Frontline staff are empowered to make decisions related to their work • Staff are encouraged to keep an eye of what is going on on the frontline, and this insight is valued (situational awareness) • Ability to tackle the causes of work-place related wellbeing issues, identifying specific staff groups who may need additional support in response to their individual circumstances	• Organisation wide understanding of the link between own practice, the organisation's resilience, and organisation's priorities • Staff from various levels across the council are able to contribute to continuous improvement and transformational change • Staff empowerment is encouraged, promoted and rewarded and staff have the psychological safety to speak their minds, take positive risks, or admit an error • The workforce is diverse so staff feel included, bringing a range of experiences and perspectives to challenge group-think when anticipating disruptions, problem solving and innovating • A corporate wellbeing culture exists where the staff's physical and mental wellbeing is nurtured

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Creates an individual profile

Organisational Resilience: Council x

Legend: Strong | Good | Mixed | Limited

Absorbative
- Strong leadership and decision-making: 67%
- Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing: 100%
- Learning driven improvement and innovation
- Leveraging finance and performance intelligence: 100%
- Resource flexibility: 67%
- Effective and collaborative relationships: 50%

Adaptive
- Strong leadership and decision-making: 67%
- Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing: 100%
- Learning driven improvement and innovation
- Leveraging finance and performance intelligence: 67% | 33%
- Resource flexibility
- Effective and collaborative relationships: 100%

Strategic
- Strong leadership and decision-making: 40%
- Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing: 33%
- Learning driven improvement and innovation: 50%
- Leveraging finance and performance intelligence: 17% | 50%
- Resource flexibility
- Effective and collaborative relationships

Axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

% of strong and good capabilities for each characteristic

Legend: Council x | All councils

- Strong leadership and decision-making: Council x 55% | All councils 70%
- Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing: Council x 73% | All councils 73%
- Learning driven improvement and innovation: Council x 20% | All councils 39%
- Leveraging finance and performance intelligence: Council x 83% | All councils 63%
- Resource flexibility: Council x 33% | All councils 56%
- Effective and collaborative relationships: Council x 43% | All councils 52%

Councils are stronger at absorbing, rather than adapting or strategically responding to disruption

- Councils have great absorbative capabilities, with 79% of indicators being strong or good

- There is a 30% gap between the strength in absorbative capabilities and strategic capabilities

- Willingness trumping wellbeing reflects the impact of this profile

Councils have strong absorbative capabilities

■ Strong   ■ Good   ■ Mixed   ■ Limited

	Strong	Good	Mixed	Limited
Absorbative	37%	42%		
Adaptive	14%	49%		
Strategic	8%	40%		

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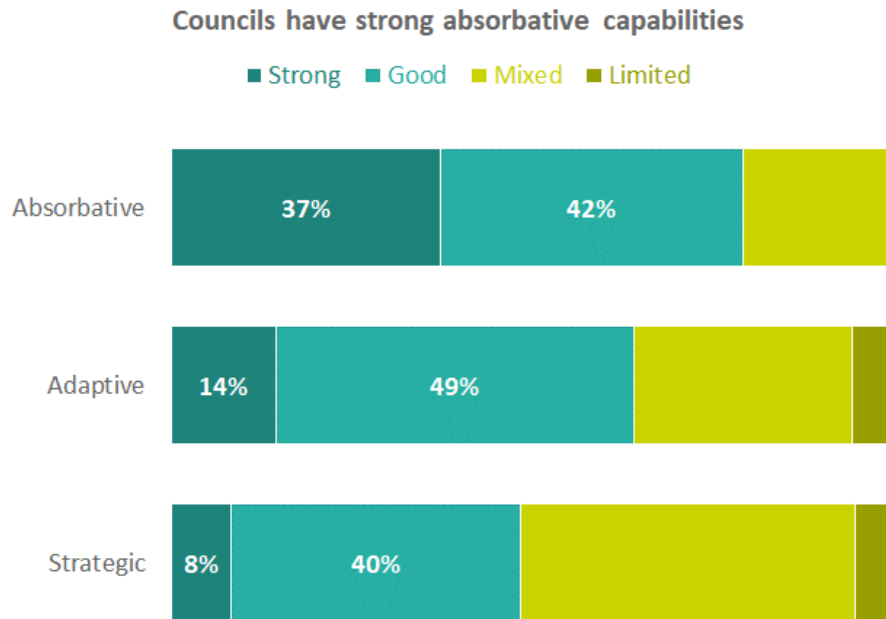
Resilience as a capability can be deliberately invested in and nurtured

- Many councils have **deliberately invested** in skills that have strengthened their resilience

- Councils have started to highlight **capabilities they want to strengthen** going forward

"Over several years we have been building a culture where people feel good working here, where they feel valued, motivated and engaged."

"We went into this crisis on a sound relationship footing...the team are very well networked with key people locally."

"You need to start with the financial systems in place or you're always trying to catch up."

"In the recovery plan we want to ensure we have a more multi-skilled workforce."

"In the last few months we have used information I've never seen before, thought of asking for or known was available. Makes me rethink what we need outside of a pandemic."

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Given your experience of applying complexity in practice, what else does the assessment framework need to be cognisant of?

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Clear areas of strength and areas to enhance

Strong & Good	Absorbative	Adaptive	Strategic	Overall
Strong leadership and decision-making	86%	63%	61%	70%
Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing	96%	64%	54%	73%
Learning driven improvement and innovation	40%	31%	47%	39%
Leveraging finance and performance intelligence	74%	79%	53%	63%
Resource flexibility	70%	63%	20%	56%
Effective and collaborative relationships	75%	69%	24%	52%
Overall	79%	63%	48%	

Would you expect a similar profile of other public sector organisations?

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Each council has a unique profile

Council	Absorbative	Adaptive	Strategic	Overall
A	85%	73%	70%	75%
B	91%	83%	42%	69%
C	77%	57%	42%	67%
D	79%	67%	43%	62%
E	83%	67%	38%	59%
F	86%	58%	40%	59%
G	73%	67%	38%	56%
H	54%	31%	57%	49%
Min	54%	31%	38%	49%
Max	91%	83%	70%	75%
Range	37%	53%	33%	26%

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A lack of information is instructive

Many of the indicators were not able to be assessed

■ Indicators assessed　　■ Indicators not assessed

Absorbative
- Strong leadership and decision-making — 8%
- Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing — 25%
- Learning driven improvement and innovation — 69%
- Leveraging finance and performance intelligence — 21%
- Resource flexibility — 4%
- Effective and collaborative relationships — 25%

Adaptive
- Strong leadership and decision-making — 21%
- Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing — 54%
- Learning driven improvement and innovation — 46%
- Leveraging finance and performance intelligence — 21%
- Resource flexibility — 50%
- Effective and collaborative relationships — 19%

Strategic
- Strong leadership and decision-making — 42%
- Staff engagement, empowerment and wellbeing — 40%
- Learning driven improvement and innovation — 38%
- Leveraging finance and performance intelligence — 13%
- Resource flexibility — 75%
- Effective and collaborative relationships — 29%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Information gaps make a difference

■ Assessed indicators　　■ All indicators

% of indicators rated as 'strong' or 'good'

	Assessed indicators	All indicators
Absorbative	79%	61%
Adaptive	63%	41%
Strategic	48%	30%

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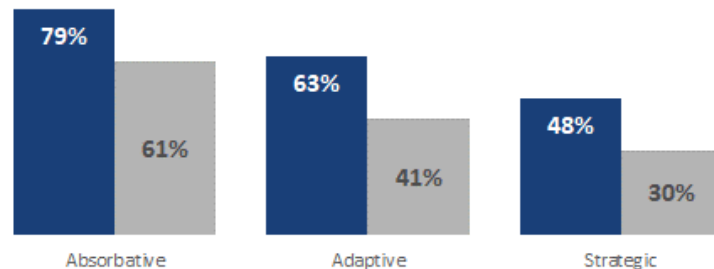
What's next?

- Applying the framework with unitary councils

- Applying the model to the health sector

- Testing the model at a service level

- Exploring what other insight we can generate from the data

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Keen to collaborate?

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