

VOICES

VOICES
OF
INDEPENDENCE
CHANGE &
EMPOWERMENT IN
STOKE-ON-TRENT

The VOICES Citywide Learning Programme Stoke-on-Trent

Shared learning opportunities to improve support for people
experiencing multiple needs

Independent Evaluation Report



Confucius set out three ways to acquire wisdom. These were reflection, imitation, and experience. It is our hope that the learning programme encourages all these methods successfully in a multi-disciplinary environment. At the heart of this effort is promoting the value of lived experience in improving the learning experiences of professionals. The learning programme has itself evolved continually since its inception at the beginning of VOICES. We are delighted that this evaluation supports the effectiveness of the programme in fostering even better working relationships across the city. VOICES and the researchers would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in the evaluation process and to the National Lottery Community Fund for making this work possible.

— **Andy Meakin**
Director, VOICES

Foreword

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1.0 Executive Summary

The VOICES Learning Programme aims to contribute to systems change to improve services for people experiencing multiple needs in Stoke-on-Trent. Learning is central to VOICES; the ambition in the original project plan was for Stoke-on-Trent 'to be a Learning City' through the Learning Programme and through co-production of solutions with Expert Citizens. This report presents the findings of a small-scale independent evaluation of the programme. The findings are based on analysis of monitoring data, and interviews with a range of stakeholders including specialist learning facilitators, Expert Citizens and learning participants.

VOICES is funded through the National Lottery Community Fund as part of the Fulfilling Lives programme. Stoke-on-Trent is one of 12 areas covered by the programme. VOICES seeks to empower people with multiple needs such as mental ill-health, substance misuse, (re)offending, and homelessness to change their lives and to influence services.

1.1 The VOICES Learning Programme Model

VOICES has a distinctive cross-organisational approach facilitating collaborative learning across the city. Participants include representatives from statutory and commissioned services, faith-based groups and non-commissioned charities. Local people with lived experience of multiple needs are involved at every level of the programme including participating as learners, trainers, facilitators and designers.

Learning opportunities are delivered in a range of ways primarily through:

- Standalone masterclasses
- Accredited courses
- Non-accredited courses
- Bespoke workshops
- Communities of Practice

Subjects for the above are identified through consultation with participating organisations, the input of Expert Citizens Community Interest Company (CIC) and VOICES' expertise from its own direct service coordination work with people who have multiple needs. The programme's development is highly flexible and responsive to new opportunities (such as delivering training in a hospital setting) and to emerging issues (for example, the escalating use of new psychoactive substances).

The content of learning opportunities can be broadly grouped into four categories:

1. The implications of legislative change and the current policy landscape for those supporting customers with multiple complex needs, and how to best navigate systems
2. Up-to-date expertise on issues currently affecting those with multiple complex needs, and how to best support these needs
3. Understanding the root causes of multiple needs to inform empathetic and effective practices
4. Professional development including wellbeing and resilience in order to best support customers, volunteers, colleagues, and multi-agency working

The creation of a shared learning environment relies on engagement from a wide spectrum of organisations and individuals within them. VOICES employs a variety of measures to maximise the reach of the programme – for example, by creating bespoke workshops, publicising opportunities widely and using an accessible online booking system.

- The creation of a shared learning environment across organisations working with people with multiple needs
- The provision of high-quality learning opportunities that are current, tailored to participants' needs and delivered by engaging and skilled trainers
- The centrality of lived experience to the programme, with Expert Citizens CIC playing a pivotal role in its design, delivery and development

¹ Voices of Independence Change and Empowerment in Stoke-on-Trent

² Expert Citizens are people with lived experience of multiple needs, who coproduced the VOICES plan and have developed alongside, and as part of, VOICES. For more information about the Expert Citizens see www.expertcitizens.org.uk

1.2 The Scale and Nature of the Learning Programme

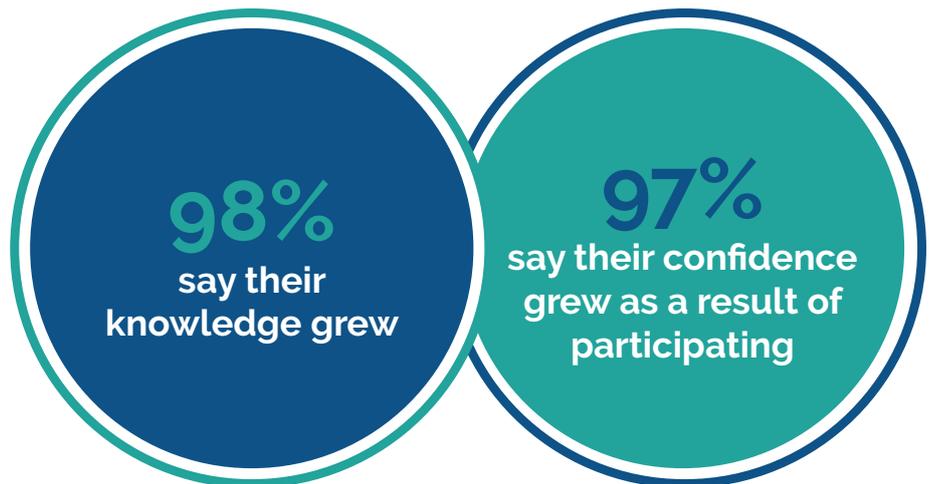
Between 2016 and 2019 the VOICES Learning Programme delivered more than 250 separate learning opportunities. During this period, in excess of 2,200 participants attended masterclass sessions and accredited and non-accredited courses. VOICES estimates that in 2019 more than 2,300 attendees participated in all VOICES Learning Programme opportunities. Almost 700 places were taken on masterclasses and accredited and non-accredited courses by individuals from 30 separate organisations, with 42 deliveries of 18 different masterclass sessions. Across the year, 28 bespoke workshops were also delivered, usually in response to an organisation approaching VOICES with a specific training need. These organisations included the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board and NHS trusts. Bespoke sessions were also delivered at regional and national events and conferences. VOICES estimates that more than 1,650 people attended these events and workshops over the course of 2019.

1.3 Individual Impacts of the Learning Programme

Individual learners' levels of satisfaction with the Learning Programme are extremely high. The evaluation identifies a variety of impacts of the programme on individual learners, including:

- 19 VOICES staff and 20 non-VOICES staff have acquired qualifications through the programme.
- Evaluation forms show that 98 per cent of learners agreed that their knowledge grew and 97 per cent agreed that their confidence grew as a result of participating in a learning opportunity
- Evaluation forms also demonstrate that many participants felt they would be able to immediately deploy knowledge and skills they had acquired
- The shared learning environment fosters professional connections and networks
- Learners report that people with lived experience of complex needs sharing their experience of accessing services in sessions is particularly impactful
- Participation in the Learning Programme has positive outcomes for Expert Citizens CIC and volunteers; this includes Expert Citizens' roles in the co-design and delivery of learning opportunities as well as people attending as learners

In 2019,
VOICES estimate
that more than
2,300
attendees
participated in
VOICES Learning
Programmes



Almost 700
places taken on masterclasses
and accredited and non-
accredited courses, spanning



30
different
organisations



18
masterclass
sessions

1.4 Organisational impacts of the Learning Programme

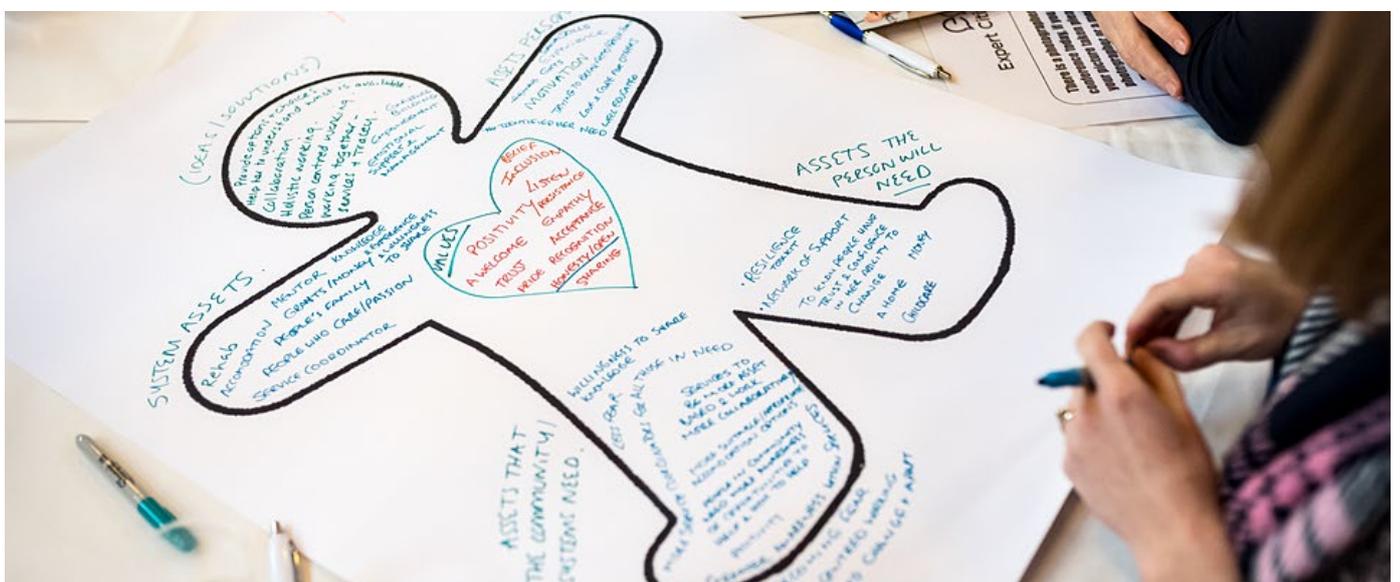
The evaluation identified a range of organisational impacts from the Learning Programme, including:

- There have been a number of examples of changes in organisational culture and practice made as a result of staff members attending Learning Programme sessions
- Bespoke workshops co-delivered by Expert Citizens seem to have been particularly impactful on some organisations' culture and practice
- Several organisations have recognised the value of commissioning in-depth training and consultancy programmes of their own following their attendance of Learning Programme sessions on particular topics
- Stakeholders suggested that the shared learning environment at the core of VOICES' Learning Programme contributes to greater cooperation and a more flexible and solutions-focused approach to service delivery by organisations and agencies supporting customers with complex needs in Stoke-on-Trent

1.5 Contribution to systems change and VOICES' legacy

Interviewees felt that the Learning Programme primarily supports 'ground up' systems change that increases skills, confidence and motivation in the workforce. This compliments strategic level systems change led by the VOICES Partnership Board and the Multi Agency Resolution Group (MARG). Examples of the Learning Programme having a particular influence on senior stakeholders were identified, such as a request from North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust Board for a bespoke workshop early in 2020, following the Chair's attendance of another VOICES Learning Programme session. Increasing engagement with the Learning Programme among senior decision-makers is an area of focus for VOICES, with activities such as February 2020's In Plain Sight: The Lives and Hopes of Invisible People – a live performance based on VOICES customer cases – achieving considerable success in engaging key influencers.

- A better understanding of the lived experience of people with multiple needs and how these experiences can be embedded through co-production of training
- Increased willingness and ability of organisations to work together flexibly to deliver services and find solutions
- Increased skills and expertise of professionals working with customers with complex needs, and empowering them to advocate effectively for clients and strive for accountability
- A culture of embedded shared learning, so that organisations across Stoke-on-Trent continue to come together for peer and expert-led learning opportunities



Evidence presented in the report shows that the Learning Programme has contributed to Stoke-on-Trent becoming a 'Learning City' in the field of multiple needs. This is due to the reach of the Learning Programme across sectors and organisations, the scale of training delivered, the co-production of the programme with Expert Citizens, and the scope of subjects covered in the programme.

Some stakeholders raised concerns about the impact of VOICES' Learning Programme coming to an end in 2022 and suggested areas that need careful consideration in order to effectively secure its potential legacy.

1.6 Recommendations

Recommendations for VOICES and partners include:

- Organisations should continue to encourage and enable staff to attend Learning Programme opportunities given their demonstrable impact at an organisational and city level
- VOICES should continue to seek greater attendance by health sector colleagues and senior staff
- VOICES should ensure that the remaining period of the Learning Programme continues to focus on the three elements of success highlighted in the evaluation: shared learning experience, high-quality provision and lived experience at the heart of the programme
- The breadth and scale of the Learning Programme is likely to be unique across the Fulfilling Lives areas; VOICES should promote this element of the programme, including to funders at the National Lottery Community Fund

Recommendations for other areas or organisations arranging training on multiple needs:

- Incorporate the three key success factors from the VOICES Learning Programme
- Undertake ongoing consultation with services and customers to identify bespoke learning needs that will influence the design and delivery of a shared learning programme
- Consider how cross-organisational training will impact on internal training offers to avoid duplication and ensure engagement (e.g. VOICES' Learning Programme avoids standard topics for individual organisations' in-house training)
- Consider from the outset practical issues that have been reflected in this report, including: promotion of opportunities, booking tools, venues, and administrative support required



2.0 Introduction

The VOICES Learning Programme has been running in Stoke-on-Trent since 2015. It is designed to support professionals and volunteers to increase their confidence, skills and knowledge in supporting people experiencing multiple needs. The programme's unique cross-organisational approach facilitates collaborative learning across the city. Expert Citizens work in partnership with VOICES in the design, development and delivery of the programme.

This report is based on analysis of:

- Learning Programme monitoring data
- Learning evaluation forms
- A discussion group with VOICES staff involved in the Learning Programme in October 2019
- 17 qualitative telephone interviews with Learning Programme stakeholders
- Three qualitative interviews with VOICES' Learning and Evaluation Manager

A list of interviewees is included in Appendix 1.

2.1 About VOICES

VOICES is made possible by the National Lottery Community Fund as part of Fulfilling Lives: Supporting people with multiple needs. The Fulfilling Lives programme is aimed at testing alternative approaches to supporting people with multiple needs. Stoke-on-Trent is one of 12 areas to share the £112 million funding over eight years.

VOICES seeks to empower people with multiple needs to change their lives and to influence services. It is a partnership project between a wide range of organisations and people with lived experience of multiple needs. Service coordination is a key element of the VOICES project and is delivered by an operational team of nine Service Coordinators and two System Brokers. The team works with people with multiple needs such as mental ill-health, substance misuse, (re)offending and homelessness, which impact on their access to services and opportunities to flourish and progress. Part of VOICES' mission is to change systems through casework and assertive advocacy to help people access appropriate services.

Central to all the work undertaken are the voices of those with lived experience of multiple needs. The Expert Citizens, supported by VOICES, have formed their own community interest company and are central to the progress of change in Stoke-on-Trent and the legacy of the VOICES project.



3.0 The VOICES Learning Programme Model

3.1 Objectives and principles

The development and delivery of a successful learning programme is critical to the achievement of VOICES' objectives. The programme aims to contribute to systems change that facilitates improved pathways, opportunities and services for people experiencing multiple needs in Stoke-on-Trent through a series of core principles:

- A cross-organisational Learning Programme enabled through shared learning environments in which participants not only have the opportunity to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence, but are also able to build relationships and better understand each other's services, procedures and roles. The aim is to make Stoke-on-Trent a 'Learning City' by fostering shared learning, responsibilities, resources and culture
- A shared learning environment is underpinned by a 'no-blame' culture that provides a safe space for openness and honesty fostered by the belief that all participants share the same core objective of improving the experiences of people with multiple needs. This culture facilitates the celebration of success and sharing of evidence-based good practice, as well as genuine reflection and learning about how practice could be improved
- The lived experience of those who have experienced multiple needs is at the core of the programme. The Expert Citizens play a central role in its design and delivery, fostering a culture of genuine understanding and empathy among the programme's participants. By listening to the voices of lived experience, learners are able to gain insight into what does and does not work well for people experiencing multiple needs
- The programme is underpinned by the philosophy of co-production, drawing on learning infrastructure, expertise and experience from across the VOICES partnership, the City of Stoke-on-Trent and the country, in the design and delivery of learning opportunities. It aims to ensure staff, volunteers and service customers are genuinely empowered to contribute to the Learning Programme



3.2 Overview of the Model

The range of learning opportunities offered through the programme is coordinated by VOICES' Learning and Evaluation Manager. Other VOICES staff and Expert Citizens CIC play a significant role in the co-design and delivery of learning opportunities.

The inputs, activities, impacts and outcomes of the VOICES' Learning Programme are summarised in Figure A.

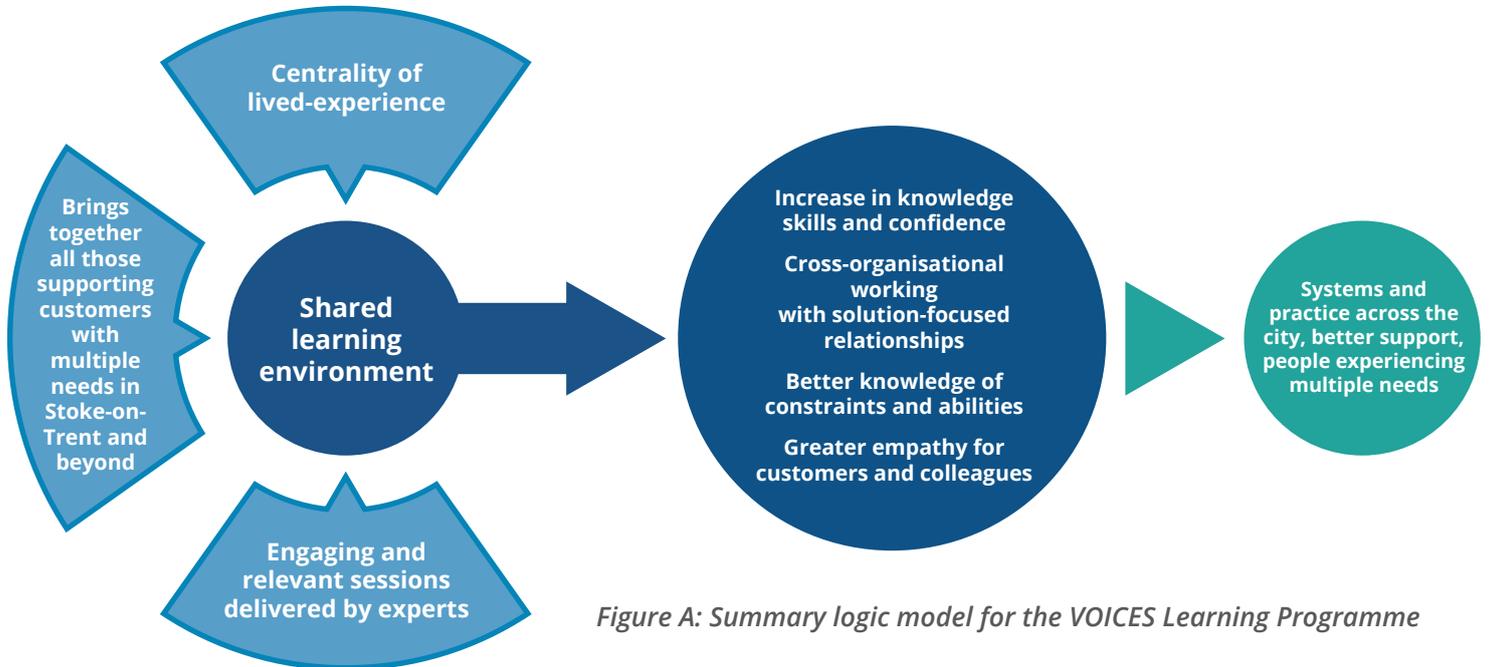


Figure A: Summary logic model for the VOICES Learning Programme

City-Wide Outcomes	Contribution to systems change to better support people experiencing multiple needs in Stoke-on-Trent
Organisational impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased cross-organisational working and a collaborative approach to creating solutions Changes to systems, practice and organisational culture
Individual impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased confidence, skills and knowledge for participants Formal accreditation and attendance leading to further study and employment for volunteers Greater empathy from a deeper understanding of trauma and working with people who have lived experience of multiple needs Enhanced professional networks and increased cooperation between individual professionals
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Masterclass sessions Accredited courses Non-accredited courses Bespoke workshops Communities of practice
Inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for 8-year cross-city learning programme Funding for around 80% of the VOICES Learning and Evaluation Manager's role Scoping of training needs of all people supporting people with multiple needs across the city Work with specialist facilitators, lecturers and training partners, design and deliver sessions that are engaging, informed by current legal and policy developments and relevant to the local context Expert Citizens' involvement in the design, development and delivery of sessions Time invested by participants to attend and evaluate learning programme Work with Service Coordination team to identify case studies that highlight barriers, challenges, gaps and positive practice Work with Communications Manager to create and promote impact of learning events

3.3 The Development of the Programme

The priority themes for the Learning Programme in the Fulfilling Lives in Stoke-on-Trent Project Plan were identified at an open meeting of some 150 people held in Stoke-on-Trent in August 2013 with substantial representation of the Expert Citizens. The priority themes included:

- Culture, leadership and empowerment
- Shared values, language and behaviours
- Managing change
- Effective services and effective partnerships for multiple needs
- Specific areas for knowledge/understanding
- Skill development areas
- Outcomes framework and maximising performance
- Embedding and supporting the learning
- Capacity, productivity and resources
- Review and evaluation

These themes have formed the basis of the development of the programme's offer, but its evolution has not been constrained by a pre-ordained remit. Ongoing work is undertaken by the Learning and Evaluation Manager to identify priority areas for the programme. The programme is planned months rather than years ahead, with capacity built in for rapid-response sessions and to repeat events that are in high demand. The programme is designed to avoid duplicating topics that are usually the focus of organisations' own in-house training, such as health and safety and equality and diversity.

Figure B summarises the process by which the Learning Programme's offer is scoped and planned. Learning needs are identified through multiple channels. In more detail these are:

- VOICES' ongoing liaison with its partnership and stakeholders, including meetings with learning and service leads, Partnership Board meetings, multi-agency meetings and its stakeholder survey. For example, ongoing liaison identified demand for training on new psychoactive substances (NPS). In response to this, NPS were covered as part of a one-day session delivered by Stoke-on-Trent Community Drug and Alcohol Service and as the focus of a one-day course delivered by KFx (a drug consultancy initiative). In 2019, 108 places were booked on these sessions
- Issues that are recurring in the cases of VOICES' customers also act as an indicator of current learning requirements, such as the need for training on preventing drug-related deaths. This led to the development of a one-day course run by KFx, on which 53 places were booked in 2019

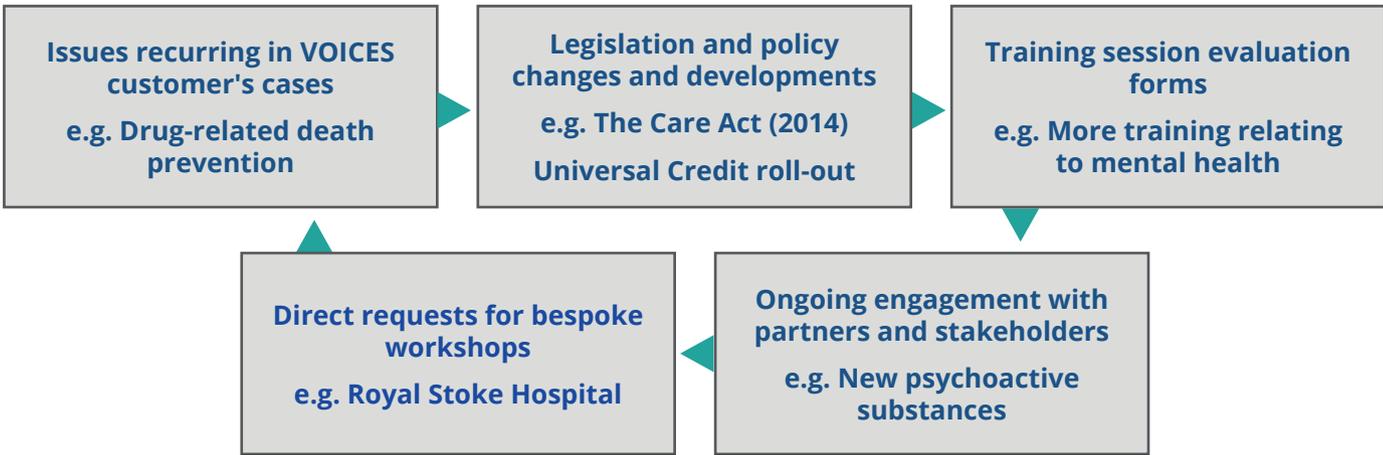


- Training session evaluation forms are another way in which Learning Programme participants are able to shape its future development. During 2018, a recurring feedback theme was the need for more mental-health-related learning opportunities. This shaped the development of a range of different sessions, run in 2019, focusing on the mental health and wellbeing of both customers and staff, including a half-day session on Understanding Grief and Loss delivered by North Staffordshire MIND and a two-day course entitled Harness Your Potential: Building Resilience and Emotional Wellbeing delivered by Homeless Link. In total, in 2019, 184 places were booked on sessions with a mental-health focus
- The programme is responsive to legislative and policy change, quickly developing bespoke sessions exploring implications for those supporting customers with multiple needs across different sectors. In response to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA), VOICES developed an HRA briefing session and then bespoke full-day sessions on the implications of the Act for the voluntary sector, the local authority, criminal justice services and health services. VOICES has run many training events for its Multiple Needs Care Act Toolkit, an inter-professional 'training aid' designed to help people with multiple needs and their support networks to articulate their circumstances in the context of the Care Act (2014). The programme has also developed a three-day course delivered by CASCAIDr on Multiple Exclusion: Homelessness and Social Care Law, on which 54 places were booked in 2019
- In response to direct requests by interested organisations, bespoke workshops are developed and delivered by the VOICES Learning and Evaluation Manager, often in partnership with the Expert Citizens CIC. Recent examples include workshops at Royal Stoke Hospital's Accident and Emergency (A&E) and Occupational Therapy departments on '*Understanding Demand on Emergency Services*' and a series of sessions delivered to Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Adults Safeguarding Partnership Board on '*Understanding Barriers to Engagement*'. Examples of the way in which interest in bespoke workshops has spread through the city is set out in Figure C

How does the VOICES Learning Programme identify training needs and preferences?



Figure B: Scoping and planning the content of the VOICES Learning Programme



Feedback from partners and stakeholders about the effectiveness of VOICES' design and planning of the Learning Programme was overwhelmingly positive. VOICES' expertise in supporting customers with complex needs, and its responsiveness to its customers and partners, means that its judgment about learning priorities is highly regarded. Stakeholders repeatedly commented that their training needs are often pre-empted and that the mechanisms enabling them to contribute to the future direction of the programme work very effectively. A small number suggested that there could be a formalisation of the mechanisms for consulting about future Learning Programme sessions.

“They're in touch with our communities; they know what's needed. They tend to focus their learning around what our communities need. They have a good scanning technique, and it's part of them being acknowledged as a partnership.”

— Thematic Lead for Vulnerability and Mental Health, Staffordshire Police



Bespoke sessions on *Understanding Demand on Emergency Services* delivered by VOICES and Expert Citizens CIC to Royal Stoke University Hospital A&E and Occupational Therapy teams in Autumn 2018



Figure C: VOICES bespoke workshops: development of awareness and demand

“Having an agency like VOICES where everything they do is an evidence-based approach and looking at best practice and systems change; having an organisation with that reputation and approach leading on the local training; I trust in that.”

— Operations Manager, Concrete

3.4 Learning Programme recruitment and promotion

3.4.1 The recruitment of participants

The creation of a shared learning environment relies on engagement from a wide spectrum of organisations. VOICES' Learning Programme aims to engage not only its partners and the city's statutory and commissioned services, but all organisations with which people experiencing multiple needs may connect, including faith-based groups and non-commissioned charities. At the start of the programme an initial contact list of key individuals such as training and communication leads was created, to which frontline contacts have been continually added. The maintenance of an up-to-date contact database that reflects the regular changes to service-provision contracts and staff turnover has been crucial to ensuring that the right people have the opportunity to access the programme.

In the early stages of the Learning Programme professionals across the city were invited to book places on events by email. This resulted in a large number of email responses and an ineffective and inefficient process of managing bookings. In 2017, an online bookings and ticket management system was adopted using Eventbrite. Professionals are able to book, amend and cancel their own places and also receive a reminder for events one week prior to the date of delivery.

3.4.2 Reaching a range of participants

Key to the recruitment of participants to Learning Programme events is the variety of sessions offered, with learning opportunities appropriate for a range of sectors and roles (both operational and strategic), and a variety of dates offered for many sessions. VOICES considers the constraints on professionals' time, particularly frontline staff, when designing learning opportunities. For example, bespoke workshops delivered for Royal Stoke University Hospital A&E Department took place on site so that staff could access the opportunity in just 90 minutes. Communities of Practice also enable professionals to learn from each other and from lived experiences in short sessions.

The choice of venues for Learning Programme sessions is important to securing participation. The venues for training are chosen to be accessible to all and centrally located with good transport links and car parking. VOICES selects venues that are not only comfortable and offer the appropriate resources and refreshments, but also that have spaces that are psychologically informed and are perceived to offer a safe, welcoming and appropriate learning environment.

3.4.3 Promotion of the programme

In order to increase the reach of the Learning Programme, VOICES actively promotes it through its website, social media and other publications. Facilitators and Expert Citizens regularly write blog posts and newsletter articles sharing the work they have undertaken with the programme. Key contacts who have given specific feedback about the impacts of the programme on their organisation are often asked to write a short summary demonstrating the changes that participation in the programme has delivered. The delivery of bespoke workshops to audiences who have not previously engaged in the programme has also broadened its reach to new participants.

⁵ Examples of these articles can be found here:
<https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2019/12/12/lost-recognising-and-responding-to-loneliness/>
<https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2018/11/02/small-change-system-change-stoke-trent/>

⁶ Examples of these articles can be found here:
<https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2019/04/03/listening-learning-nhs/>
<https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2019/03/04/learning-programme-safeguarding-abuse-neglect/>



3.5 The design of learning opportunities

3.5.1 Co-production of sessions

The programme aims to work with the most appropriate people and organisations at the local and national level to commission and design high-quality, impactful sessions. The Learning Programme strives to harness Stoke-on-Trent’s local learning infrastructure and expertise where possible. VOICES’ partners such as Expert Citizens CIC, Staffordshire North and Stoke-on-Trent Citizens Advice Bureau (SNSCAB) and North Staffordshire Mind routinely design and deliver learning opportunities. Local further and higher education institutions are also involved in the programme’s delivery. For example, VOICES and Expert Citizens worked with Staffordshire University to design and deliver a Level 3 accredited Peer Mentoring course. VOICES builds and maintains networks with expert subject-leaders and facilitators across the country who are well-positioned to design and deliver evidence-based, authoritative sessions that apply their expertise and experience to the context of supporting customers experiencing multiple needs in Stoke-on-Trent.

3.5.2 The centrality of lived experience

A critical element of the co-production at the heart of the VOICES Learning Programme is the centrality of the voices of those with lived experience of multiple needs to the development of learning opportunities. VOICES Expert Citizens co-design a range of learning opportunities, most notably the bespoke workshops and the Level 3 Peer Mentoring course. Expert Citizens emphasise the supportive and empowering context of their involvement in the Learning Programme; they are not asked to simply act as witnesses or deliver a script, but have ownership over the design and delivery of the sessions in which they are involved. For example, the delivery of the Level 3 Peer Mentoring course was strongly shaped by a lead Expert Citizen to include more group working and peer support. In addition, many external facilitators draw heavily on lived experience in the design and delivery of their sessions.

3.5.3 Tailored Content

VOICES works with all its local and national delivery partners and course leaders to ensure that the content of learning opportunities is highly tailored to the needs of participants. Stakeholders commented on the extent to which training is tailored to focus on the pertinence of each issue to those working with customers with complex needs, as well as reflecting the relevant local context of the topic.

“We’ve had generic training on the Care Act... which had focused on the more traditional routes to social services, but VOICES’ training on the Care Act was focused on how to navigate the Act to make sure people with complex needs access the support they’re eligible for and entitled to.”

— Manager, Housing First, Stoke-on-Trent

3.5.4 An iterative development process

Learning opportunities are not simply designed and then repeatedly delivered to different audiences over an extended period. Facilitators adapt their sessions to include, for example, new research findings or case studies. The Level 3 Peer Mentoring qualification, jointly designed and delivered by VOICES, Expert Citizens and Staffordshire University, was developed in a highly iterative way, with 360-degree feedback from the first course shaping the delivery of subsequent courses. The initial development of the course in response to the ending of the Level 2 Peer Mentoring qualification by the course provider exemplifies the ability of the Learning Programme to respond creatively to challenges.

“The training provided is always current, covering what’s new out there and relevant to the sector.”

— Operations Manager,
Concrete

“Every time I do a session I’ll change it a little bit. I try to tailor it to the needs of the audience.”

— Training Facilitator

3.6 The delivery of learning opportunities

3.6.1 An accessible shared learning environment

There was agreement among stakeholders that the VOICES Learning Programme very effectively creates shared learning environments for cross-organisational training for professionals and volunteers across Stoke-on-Trent who support people with multiple needs.

The fact that the Learning Programme is accessed not just by a range of agencies, but also by employees in a full spectrum of strategic and operational roles, as well as volunteers, many of whom have lived experience of multiple needs, is perceived as enhancing the richness of this shared learning environment. Stakeholders agreed that the quality of facilitation on the Learning Programme contributes to high-quality interaction between participants from different sectors and backgrounds. Participants with lived experience emphasised the inclusive and non-hierarchical culture of sessions which ensure that their contributions are heard and valued.



“The mixture of people is so vast; it’s really good because it makes you think and learn... Having that variety of people in the room can bring you out of your comfort zone, out of your organisational barriers.”

— Training Facilitator

“The way it’s set up, you have various disciplines and providers at the training, so it’s great for networking. So not only do you get learning from the actual training, you get learning from across the sector as well... and actually understanding as well of what to expect from different services and what different services may be up against.”

— Operations Manager,
Concrete

⁷ For more information see <https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2017/12/01/peer-mentoring-training/>

“Because of the amount of people who go with lived experience, it's less judgemental. People do feel comfortable, and if they've got lived experience they feel able to speak.”

— Project Assistant, Housing First, Stoke-on-Trent and Expert Citizen

“They've all been mixed training courses, but there's not been any distinction made by the tutor or by anybody about who was a volunteer and who was a paid member of staff.”

— Expert Citizen

“It's always a good environment, even as a volunteer I never felt there was an us and them mentality.”

— Community Development Coordinator, VOICES and Expert Citizen

The creation of a no-blame culture by facilitators is critical to this positive environment, which encourages openness, honesty and trust between participants, including those with lived experience, that that they will be heard and not be judged. VOICES emphasises the importance of holding training in neutral, comfortable venues to the creation of this atmosphere.

3.6.2 The quality of training

Feedback from stakeholders suggests that the VOICES Learning Programme is widely-regarded as evidence-based, current and authoritative. Expert Citizens' role in the design and delivery of training sessions receives much praise, as does training delivered by VOICES staff, who are widely considered to be able and highly informed trainers. The professional independence and expertise of external facilitators are also highly valued by participants, who commented on how VOICES selects facilitators who are both authoritative and highly engaging in their delivery of sessions.

“The calibre of training is always really high, so we're able to rely on that.”

— Operations Manager, Concrete

“What you want [as a facilitator] is someone who has been through it; who can reaffirm that what you're talking about makes sense, and that's it's achievable.”

— Training Facilitator

“The trainers have a lot of experience; far more than we could ever get in the Police... when it comes to vulnerability such as substance misuse, such as motivational interviewing, active listening, hoarding things like that, we don't have that skillset within the force... The people that they've used, you can see, have had that experience, have been in the job, and I think that's key.”

— Thematic Lead for Vulnerability and Mental Health, Staffordshire Police



4.0 The scale and nature of the Learning Programme

4.1 The format and scale of learning opportunities

Learning opportunities are provided in five main formats:

Accredited courses: Learning delivered over multiple sessions, the successful completion of which leads to the award of a qualifications (e.g. Level 3 Supervising First Aid for Mental Health, Level 3 Education and Training). Courses have been delivered with partnership such as Staffordshire University. They are available to VOICES partnership staff and volunteers and staff who work in services across the city who support people experiencing multiple needs.

Non-accredited courses: Learning delivered over multiple sessions designed to meet a specific current training need of those supporting people experiencing multiple needs (e.g. navigating the benefits system). Bespoke courses open to the VOICES partnership are developed and delivered in partnership with expert organisations including SNSCAB.

Masterclasses: Standalone learning sessions led by local and national experts on key subjects identified as current learning priorities through the Learning Programme's planning and development process. These are open to all professionals and volunteers working with people with multiple needs in Stoke-on-Trent. Some sessions carry CPD credits for social care professionals.

Bespoke workshops: VOICES and Expert Citizens CIC co-design and deliver a wide range of bespoke workshops to meet the specific learning requirements of organisations who work with customers experiencing multiple needs. VOICES also delivers workshops at a wide range of conferences, events, training days and board meetings across the city, region and country when invited to share learning.

Communities of Practice: A shared learning environment is a central feature of the Stoke-on-Trent Communities of Practice hosted by VOICES. These multi-agency communities centre on case-based learning to aide reflective practice around a particular theme, such as hospital discharge for those with multiple needs.

Figure D outlines the type of learning opportunity by number of sessions. The majority of learning opportunities are provided in the masterclass format. In 2019 there were 42 deliveries of 18 different masterclass sessions. There were also 28 bespoke workshops delivered to individual organisations and events throughout 2019.

Full details of the masterclasses, courses and bespoke workshops run in 2019 are set out in Appendix 2.

Figure D: Total number of learning opportunities 2016-2019

Type of Course	July - Dec 2016	2017	2018	2019	Total July 2016 - Dec 2019
Masterclass	15	36	41	42	134
Bespoke Workshops	6	24	17	28	75
Communities of Practice	9	7	0	4	20
Non-accredited Courses	1	5	4	4	14
Accredited Courses	4	5	1	2	12
TOTAL	35	77	63	80	255

⁸ Communities of Practice are not discussed in detail in this report. For more information see https://issuu.com/voicesofstoke/docs/voices_community_of_practice_guide_19_single_page <https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2018/02/22/stoke-trent-cop-past-present-exciting-future/>

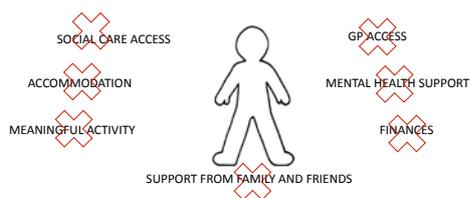
4.2 The content of learning opportunities

As discussed in section 3.3, the VOICES Learning Programme is designed to be flexible and responsive to current training needs. Therefore, the content and format of sessions evolves to best meet the current needs of customers experiencing multiple needs and the current training requirements of those working to support them. However, it is possible to broadly group learning opportunities into four categories:

- 1. The implications of legislative change and the current policy landscape for those supporting customers with multiple complex needs, and how to best navigate systems.**
 Examples from 2019 include learning opportunities covering Prisoners' Housing Rights; Homelessness, Multiple Needs and the Law; Navigating Benefits and Mental Health Services for customers with multiple needs; and Multiple Exclusion, Homelessness and the Law.
- 2. Up-to-date expertise on issues currently affecting those with multiple complex needs, and how to best support these needs.**
 Examples from 2019 include learning opportunities covering suicide, self-injury, hoarding, loneliness, drug and alcohol addiction, and grief and loss.
- 3. Understanding the root causes of multiple needs to inform empathetic and effective practices.**
 Examples from 2019 include learning opportunities covering Psychologically Informed Environments, Trauma Informed Care and motivational interviewing.
- 4. Professional development including wellbeing and resilience in order to best support customers.**
 Examples from 2019 include learning opportunities covering mental health first aid and building resilience and emotional wellbeing.



Is it really Lifestyle Choice?



Long Term and Multiple Traumas

- Poverty
- Poor educational experience
- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Bereavement
- Poor relationships and family breakdowns
- Unemployment and job loss
- 2nd/3rd generation of disadvantaged families creating entrenched learned behaviour often transferring to challenging behaviours

Fair and Equal Access?

- Barriers and challenges with GP registration
- People experiencing homelessness unable to access Social Care assessments
- Unable to open bank account for benefit payments
- Inability to attend support and medical appointments
- No communication- postal appointments
- Dual diagnosis - mental health services / drug and alcohol support services
- Housing issues – past evictions, substance misuse, mental ill health, challenging behaviours, social care needs

VOICES works with a wide range of local and national partners to design and deliver learning opportunities. In 2019, Learning Programme partners included:

- Expert Citizens CIC
- Citizens Advice Staffordshire North and Stoke-on-Trent (SNSCAB)
- North Staffordshire MIND
- Stoke-on-Trent Community Drug and Alcohol Service (CDAS)
- KFx (a drug consultancy initiative)
- Centre for Adults' Social Care – Advice, Information and Dispute Resolution (CASCAIDr)
- Shelter
- Homeless Link
- Steven Talbot Consulting
- No One Left Out (works with organisations to become a reflective, trauma responsive, psychologically informed environment)

The full details of all learning opportunities provided in 2019 are listed in Appendix 2.

4.3 Scale and patterns of Learning Programme attendance

In total, between 2016 and 2019, there were 2,288 training places provided by the VOICES Learning Programme:

- The majority of these were on masterclasses, with the number of places on this type of learning opportunity more than doubling from 226 in 2016 to 614 in 2019
- More than 200 places were taken on accredited courses between 2016 and 2019
- Another 200 places were taken on non-accredited courses between 2016 and 2019

In 2019, including bespoke workshops and external conferences and events, an estimated 2,360 attendees participated in VOICES Learning Programme opportunities.

**From
2016 – 2019**
The VOICES
Programme
accommodated



200+
places on an
accredited course
along with another

200
places on non-
accredited courses



Figure E: Number of Learning Programme attendees 2016-2019*

Type of Course	Feb - Dec 2016	2017	2018	2019	Total July 2016 - Dec 2019
Masterclass	226	480	539	614	1,859
Non-accredited Courses	26	71	51	62	210
Accredited Courses	59	90	50	20	219
TOTAL	311	641	640	696	2,288

*attendees may have attended more than one course within a period

⁹ For more information see www.steventalbotconsultancy.co.uk

¹⁰ For more information see www.nooneleftout.co.uk

Figure F: Number of Learning Programme attendees by learning opportunity 2019

Type of Course	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Masterclass	15	102	93	58	58	47	35	35	40	49	56	26	614
Accredited Courses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	0	20
Non-accredited Courses	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	0	14	0	12	15	62
Bespoke workshops & external conferences and events ¹¹	52	52	120	15	152	132	130	94	210	455	222	30	1,664
TOTAL	67	154	213	73	210	200	165	129	264	504	310	71	2,360

Over the course of 2019 individuals from 30 different organisations reserved places on VOICES Learning Programme masterclasses and courses. Ten of these were VOICES' partner organisations, who booked 74 per cent of the available places on learning opportunities. The Learning Programme is also accessed by a wide range of other organisations, with 19 organisations that are not formal VOICES partners participating in masterclasses and courses in 2019.

The programme very successfully brings together organisations across a range of different sectors whose work involves supporting individuals with complex needs. These include statutory service providers such as the DWP, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, Staffordshire Police, a number of NHS trusts and prison and probation service providers. Stoke-on-Trent Council is one of the most significant participant organisations, with a wide range of departments represented, including Adult Social Care, Housing Options and Environmental Health. In addition, a range of third-sector organisations, including charities and housing associations, routinely attend the Learning Programme.

Figure G lists the organisations that attended learning opportunities in 2019, the number of places they reserved and the number of different learning opportunities booked.



¹¹ Some figures for bespoke workshops and external events are estimates

¹² VOICES' partner organisations refers to those organisations who formally agreed to support the VOICES programme – for example, through representation on the VOICES Partnership Board.

¹³ If an organisation attended multiple sessions of the same masterclass, this would be counted as attending one learning opportunity

Figure G: Organisations attending VOICES Learning Programme masterclasses and courses 2019

Organisation	Number of places booked	Number of unique learning opportunities
Honeycomb Group, including Concrete (formerly Arch), Glow and Staffordshire Housing including Revival	186	19
Brighter Futures (incl. VOICES staff team)	163	20
Stoke-on-Trent City Council	143	18
DWP	64	16
The Staffordshire and West Midlands CRC Ltd. Part of the Reducing Reoffending Partnership	35	10
YMCA North Staffs	31	12
Expert Citizens CIC	30	13
Aspire	18	13
Housing First (Brighter Futures, Concrete and Expert Citizens CIC)	17	9
NSCAB	17	8
Staffordshire Police	15	10
HMPPS/HMP Dovegate	13	8
The Gingerbread Centre	11	9
National Probation Service	7	5
My Community Matters	7	5
Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service	6	5
University Hospitals of North Midlands	6	5
The Macari Centre	6	1
Saltbox	5	3
No 11, Swan Bank	5	5
Royal Stoke University Hospital	4	4
North Staffs Combined Healthcare Trust	3	3
Midlands Partnership Foundation trust	3	2
CAMHS	2	1
Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Partnership Trust	1	1
North Staffordshire Mind	1	1
Younger Mind	1	1
Staffordshire University	1	1

Attendance figures illustrate the extent to which individual sessions are a cross-organisational learning environment. Rather than sending large numbers of individuals to a limited number of sessions, organisations attend a wide range of learning opportunities. The two highest attending organisations in 2019 were the Honeycomb Group, which attended 19, and Brighter Futures, which attended 20 of the 21 different learning opportunities offered in 2019. This pattern of attending a wide variety of courses is also evident among smaller organisations and those who participate less in VOICES' Learning Programme. For example, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and University Hospitals of North Midlands both booked six places across five unique learning opportunities over the course of 2019.

“It brings lots of different organisations together, and from those different organisations you get lots of different people at different levels... and they're all learning from each other.”

— Training Facilitator

Some stakeholders also offered reflections on groups that it would be beneficial to attract in greater numbers to Learning Programme opportunities:

- More senior leaders and Partnership Board members – so that more people who make the key decisions are in the room
- More health and mental health professionals
- Staff across all sectors who are reluctant to attend learning opportunities, to try to mitigate the predominance of a self-selecting group of self-motivated individuals
- Those who work with customers who would benefit from early intervention to prevent the development of multiple needs

4.4 Issues around demand for the Learning Programme

Analysis of 2019 attendance figures suggests around one in five (19%) places reserved on masterclasses and courses were not taken up on the day. This is a reasonable conversion rate of bookings to attendance, especially given the demanding, frontline nature of the jobs of many participants. A recurring theme among stakeholders was that high demand for the Learning Programme means that places on many sessions are booked up very quickly, which can be a barrier to attendance.

“For every one person who gets a place I probably have three people who say ‘I wanted to go on that.’”

**— Social Care Development Manager,
Stoke-on-Trent City Council**



The balance between the number of places and the range of different learning opportunities offered has to be carefully considered. Where demand for an opportunity is high, multiple sessions are scheduled, but this is balanced with ensuring that sessions take place in a genuinely shared learning environment, with a range of organisations and roles present.

“They could put on loads of courses just for Adult Social Care, and I could get loads more people through, but they wouldn't be getting the same benefit... What they like is going on a course with people who have expertise.”

— Social Care Development Manager,
Stoke-on-Trent City Council

4.5 Bespoke Workshops

In 2019 VOICES delivered more bespoke workshops than in any previous year of the project. As set out in Figure C, the development of bespoke workshops has been organic as organisations hear about the Learning Programme from attending sessions or via their networks.

Bespoke workshops are usually developed in response to an organisation approaching VOICES with a specific training need. These organisations have tended to be outside the VOICES partnership and, on the whole, are larger organisations such as the local prison, adult safeguarding board and NHS trusts, for whom interactions with customers with multiple needs is just one aspect of the broad and complex jobs they do. In addition, bespoke workshops are delivered at regional and national events such as the annual conferences of the Local Government Association and Homeless Link.

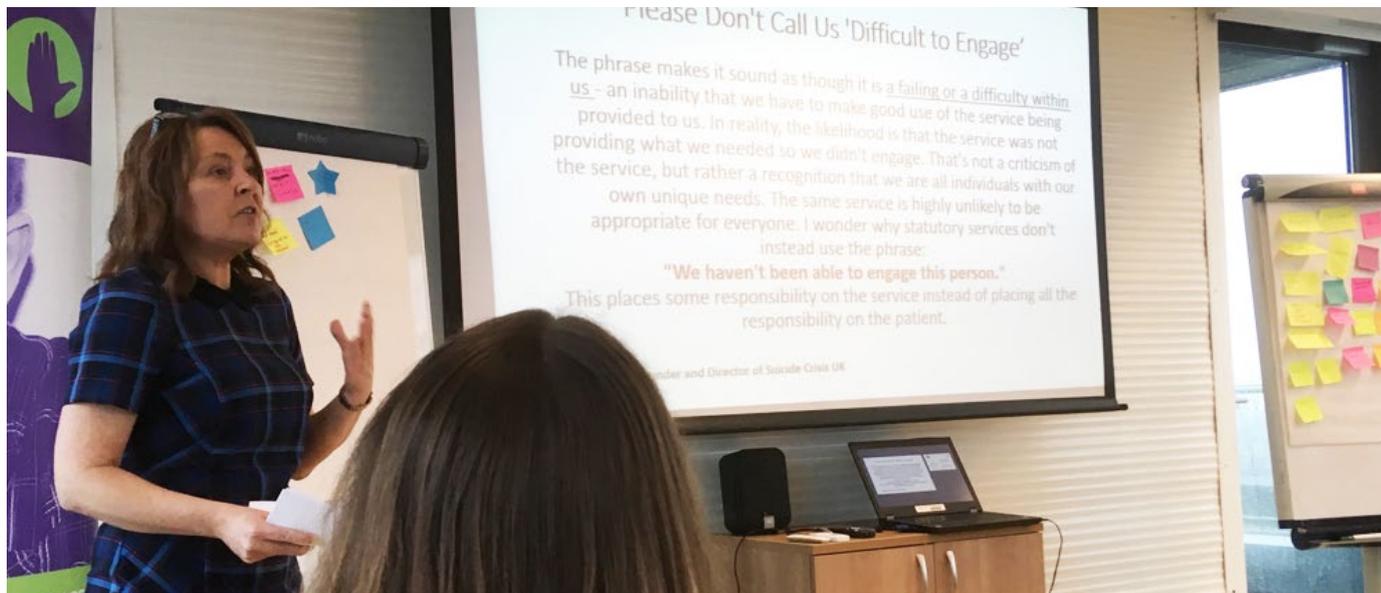
Many bespoke workshops are co-designed and delivered with Expert Citizens CIC. Expert Citizens involved in this process describe a culture of genuine co-production and feel a strong sense of ownership over the sessions (see section 5.2 for further discussion of the impacts of this). Interviews with stakeholders who have commissioned bespoke workshops and analysis of session evaluation forms highlight the significant impact of Expert Citizens sharing their stories, particularly their lived experience of interactions with their services.

“It's always good to have a service user's story. It's a luxury item for us.”

— Patient Safety Manager,
Harplands Hospital¹⁴

“Not only educational, but also emotionally effective – to put myself in their shoes.”

— Evaluation form, Royal Stoke Hospital
A&E workshop, Autumn 2018



Organisations who have commissioned bespoke events praised VOICES' responsiveness to their requirements, partnership approach to the development of sessions and flexibility in relation to where and when workshops were delivered.

“We were in control, we said this is what we want to achieve... how can we improve engagement with people who are more challenging to us, although not impossible to engage.”

— Manager, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Board

Examples of recent bespoke workshops include:

- In June 2018 a bespoke workshop focusing on the misuse of Novel Psychoactive Substances, as well as the benefits of peer mentoring, was delivered to more than 50 prisoners at HMP Dovegate by a volunteer Educator from Expert Citizens CIC and VOICES' Learning and Evaluation Manager¹⁵
- Following discussions between a Royal Stoke University Hospital A&E Consultant and VOICES, in Autumn 2018, VOICES and Expert Citizens CIC delivered two workshops at the hospital's A&E department designed to develop awareness of why people may find themselves at A&E and what actions staff can take to best support them. A volunteer Educator from Expert Citizens CIC shared his lived experience of homelessness and addiction and insights about how he felt when he was experiencing mental ill-health and was admitted to A&E. The logistics of delivering workshops to frontline medical staff are discussed further in section 3.4.2. The impacts of the workshops on systems and practice in the department are outlined in section 5.3.1¹⁶
- In November and December 2019, VOICES and Expert Citizens CIC were invited to present at national membership conferences for Research in Practice for Adults (RiPFA), a not-for-profit organisation with a network made up of more than 40 partners from local authorities and voluntary sector organisations. The audiences included more than 50 delegates in a range of positions including social workers, assistant directors and safeguarding staff. The sessions were an opportunity to share learning between VOICES and Adult Social Care, showcasing how more collaborative ways of working between different sectors was made possible by using the VOICES Multiple Needs Toolkit¹⁷ in relation to adults with needs linked to exclusion and homelessness¹⁸
- In response to the findings of a Serious Case Review, the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Board Manager approached VOICES about the development of a bespoke session. This led to the co-production of a workshop entitled Understanding Barriers to Engagement by VOICES and Expert Citizens CIC, which was delivered to more than 350 members of the SSASPB at seven learning days in the city and across the county. The sessions were viewed as highly effective and impactful, with the sharing of lived experience of self-neglect by an Expert Citizens C.I.C volunteer educator receiving particular praise



“The evaluations we got afterwards were just incredible, he [Expert Citizen] was a star...It came from the heart and it got really good feedback.”

— Manager, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Board

A full list of bespoke workshops delivered in 2019 can be found in Appendix 2.

Bespoke sessions are not all delivered in a workshop format, with VOICES exploring creative ways to extend the reach of the Learning Programme beyond its core participants. In February 2020, two local performing arts companies with international reputations, B Arts and Rideout, presented eight performances of *In Plain Sight: The Lives and Hopes of Invisible People* – a live performance based on VOICES customers' cases. Walking a promenade (through streets on set) audience members saw projections and professional actors, singers and musicians delivering these stories, with opportunities for interactive debate alongside the performances.²⁰

The events were hugely successful, with almost 300 audience members attending the eight performances. Participants gave extremely positive feedback about the original and impactful nature of the events.²¹

“Totally blown away by In Plain Sight. Never been touched by anything so much. The whole presentation and acting was just incredible and full credit to all involved! Very, very powerful and moving! Great way to get a message out! Amazing!”

— Audience member

“I thought it was a very professional, well-delivered and thought-provoking production and the use of the building at B Arts to take the audience through the different sets in the show made for a unique and interactive experience.”

— Audience member

“The very original presentation of a difficult subject was both thought provoking and extremely effective in communicating the message... I cannot speak too highly of both the actors who portrayed the events so graphically nor of the two ‘volunteers’ who shared their stories. There is no production more powerful than by those affected sharing their real-life experiences.”

— Audience member



¹⁴ Harplands is a mental-health facility in Stoke-on-Trent operated by the North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust.

¹⁵ For more information about the HMP Dovegate workshop see: <https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2018/07/27/hmp-dovegate-nps-learning/>

¹⁶ For more information about the Royal Stoke University Hospital A&E workshops see: <https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2018/11/02/small-change-system-change-stoke-trent/>

¹⁷ For more information about VOICES' Care Act Multiple Needs Toolkit see: <https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/care-act-toolkit/>

¹⁸ For more information about the RiPFA sessions see: <https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2020/03/09/working-with-complexity-social-care-and-housing/>
<https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2019/04/03/sharing-caring-ripfa-event/>

¹⁹ For more information about the SSASPB workshops see: <https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2019/08/30/please-dont-call-us-difficult-engage/>

²⁰ For more information about In Plain Sight, and to view the performance photo gallery see: <https://www.voicesofstoke.org.uk/2020/04/09/in-plain-sight-review-and-photo-gallery-2/>

²¹ For Stoke-on-Trent Live's review of In Plain Sight see: <https://www.stokesentinel.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/review-plain-sight-b-arts-3821135>

Audience members were drawn from a range of sectors involved in supporting those with multiple needs, including local and central government, housing and homelessness, health and social care and the police and prison service. The event was particularly effective at reaching key influencers through the use of VIP invitations. High-profile attendees included Jonathan Gullis, MP for Stoke North, Jo Gideon, MP for Stoke Central and Jon Rouse, City Director of Stoke-on-Trent City Council. A number of local councillors and senior representatives of many local statutory service providers also attended, including a several senior colleagues from NHS Trusts.

Although it is too early to evaluate the wider impact of In Plain Sight, VOICES have already received requests for more learning and bespoke sessions from Dovegate Prison and North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare Trust as a result of this creative learning opportunity.



5.0 Outcomes of the Learning Programme

5.1 Impacts on individual learners

A number of VOICES and partnership staff have been awarded formal qualifications through their participation in accredited courses such as the Level 3 qualification in Supervising First Aid for Mental Health. In addition, some masterclasses such as Prisoners' Housing Rights carry CPD credits for social care professionals. In this way the programme contributes to the workforce development of VOICES and partners' staff.

Figure H: Achievement of qualifications through the VOICES Learning Programme 2016-2019

Group	Number achieving qualification
VOICES staff achieving qualification	19
Non-VOICES staff achieving qualification	20 (18 of whom are employed by VOICES partners)

Individual learners' levels of satisfaction with the Learning Programme sessions they attend are extremely high, with almost all participants agreeing that their training needs were met as a result of attending the training, and that their knowledge and confidence had grown as a result of the activity.

Figure I: VOICES Learning Programme participants' satisfaction with learning opportunities

Measure of satisfaction	Percentage agreeing
Do you feel your needs were met?	99%
Has your knowledge grown as a result of this activity?	98%
Has your confidence grown as a result of this activity?	97%

Base: 1,907 completed learning opportunity evaluation forms, July 2016-December 2019

Stakeholders emphasise that the high regard in which VOICES training is held reflects the quality and usefulness of the learning opportunities. Several commented that team members' enthusiasm to sign up to VOICES' Learning Programme sessions (reflected in the speed at which places are filled) is testament to their positive experiences of previous sessions, and the impact of these. Stakeholders also suggest that the way the Learning Programme is designed to be responsive to current training requirements means that learning from sessions is directly applicable to the daily context in which professionals supporting customers with multiple needs are working. The potential for immediate impact is amplified because participants are likely to book places on courses that are particularly relevant to current issues their customers are experiencing.

“There's a lot of times when I've gone on the website and thought 'I really need that' because I dealt with that issue the other day.”

— Thematic Lead for Vulnerability and Mental Health, Staffordshire Police

“Everybody is really happy when they come back from the sessions and always try to book onto something else. People do tend to come back to me to say if there's a problem with training and people have never done it for VOICES training.”

— Social Care Development Manager, Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Analysis of the feedback given by learners on their evaluation forms suggests that many feel they will be able to immediately deploy knowledge and skills they have acquired in order to better support their customers. Participants feel better equipped to take practical actions that could prove critical to customers' health and wellbeing – for example, identifying signs of self-injury or taking steps to prevent drug-related deaths. Feedback forms also echo the sentiments of stakeholder interviewees that the training can often empower participants to have the confidence to undertake well-informed advocacy on behalf of customers.

“I feel more confident on how to support anyone who is self-harming.”

— Evaluation form, Understanding Self-injury, Spring 2019

“I'm so much more aware of how we can prevent deaths.”

— Evaluation form, Drugs-related Death Prevention, Spring 2019

“I would feel more confident to question a decision I felt was wrong.”

— Evaluation form, Homelessness, Multiple Needs and the Law, Spring 2019

“The way the training is delivered is very empowering, so people definitely then put it into action.”

— Operations Manager, Concrete

“The Shelter training was the most impactful training... The trainer had a lifetime of legal experience in housing and homelessness and he's someone who's used to challenging the local authorities... People started to ask for more decisions in writing and were quite shocked by how effective that was... When they left the training they were more motivated to challenge decisions.”

— Probation Officer, Senior Lead for Housing and Welfare, SWM CRC Ltd

Many participants in training sessions with a focus on professional practice and personal development also feel there are immediate changes they can make as a result of their learning.

“It helps staff resilience, but ultimately the impact for people with complex needs is that we can take a much higher tolerance approach.”

— Manager, Housing First, Stoke-on-Trent

“It will alter the way I practice in the future. It improved my ability to reflect on my practice.”

— Evaluation forms, Inspiring Change: Motivational interviewing, Spring 2019

The quality of materials that participants can access after training sessions was also widely praised, with stakeholders suggesting these assist those who have attended Learning Programme sessions to embed the learning in their own practice as well as share it with colleagues. For example, documents summarising the implications of legislation such as the HRA and the Care Act were repeatedly referred to as helpful resources.

“When enquiries come up in our service that relate to that particular piece of legislation I can refer back to those flyers and share that information with other people.”

— Housing Options Lead, Housing Solutions Service – Stoke-on-Trent City Council

“I feel we were given a great toolkit to help us explore beyond the training days.”

— Evaluation form, Harnessing your potential: Building Resilience and Emotional Wellbeing, Summer 2019

The impact of VOICES' Learning Programme's shared learning environment in fostering professional connections and networks that individuals are able to draw on in their work was highlighted in evaluation forms and interviewee feedback.

“The benefits are that you learn about other people's service area in a way you wouldn't do if it was just your team attending a session.”

– Housing Options Lead, Housing Solutions Service, Stoke-on-Trent City Council

“Just by getting those people together in one room in a learning environment, I find helps loads when it comes to looking for allies.”

– Community Development Coordinator, VOICES and Expert Citizen

Another recurring theme was the profound impact on individuals of people with lived experience of complex needs sharing their experience of accessing services. Expert Citizens, VOICES staff and stakeholders all gave examples of the powerful impact of hearing the realities that those with lived experience have faced, especially in relation to services that they deliver. The aggregate effect of these personal impacts for individual organisations and the city as a whole are discussed below in section 5.3.

“That contact with someone with lived experience – that is invaluable... To hear about the barriers that people underestimate is so impactful and emotive.”

– Manager, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Board

5.2 Impacts for Expert Citizens

The evaluation found that participation in the Learning Programme has positive outcomes for Expert Citizens and volunteers from other organisations. The impacts of the Learning Programme for Expert Citizens do not simply derive from participation in sessions with other learners, but also from the pivotal role they play in the co-design and delivery of learning opportunities. Other Expert Citizens and the VOICES Learning and Evaluation Manager play a mentoring role and offer a shadowing scheme for those interested in sharing their experiences with an audience. The likelihood that sharing experiences may trigger flashbacks and negative responses is recognised, and time is made for those sharing lived experience to reflect on their feelings after every session. This facilitates an open and supportive culture where people can gain experience and confidence by contributing to the delivery of the Learning Programme.

Since 2016, 30 Expert Citizens have moved into employment or self-employment and four have undertaken further study. Expert Citizens emphasise that the knowledge, skills and formal qualifications they acquired through the Learning Programme were critical to them moving into employment or education.

Between 2016 and 2019, 31 volunteer Expert Citizens achieved qualifications through the Learning Programme, which in many cases have proven pivotal in the move to employment. Credits gained through the Learning Programme have also contributed to Expert Citizens' accessing higher education courses through the accreditation of prior learning.

“All the qualifications I got through the Learning Programme are super relevant in the role that I've got today. I don't think without those qualifications that I would have got this job to be honest... I've got a job; I'm working and that's huge.”

– Community Development Coordinator, VOICES and Expert Citizen

“Volunteering, it was the courses that gave me the knowledge to do the job I'm doing... If I didn't do them, I don't think I'd be doing this job.”

– Project Assistant, Housing First - Stoke-on-Trent and Expert Citizen

Interviews suggested that participation in the Learning Programme can assist Expert Citizens' move into employment in a number of ways:

- Contributing to the design and delivery of the Learning Programme equips Expert Citizens with the transferable skills such as presenting to a group and facilitation
- As well as leading to the acquisition of new skills, participation in the programme can enable volunteers to refresh knowledge and skills acquired through previous employment
- Participation in the programme contributes to individuals' recognition of the potential value of their lived experience to their employment prospects
- The opportunity to make professional contacts through participation in the programme can help build a network that can facilitate the move into employment
- The building of these professional relationships can even contribute to the recovery of those with lived experience by helping to break down barriers with professionals delivering services to those with multiple needs

“I'd been a sales manager years and years ago, and I was good on the phone, that was my role. I hadn't realised that I could use those skills now.”

— Support worker, Housing First and Expert Citizen

“I've been able to build up my social network of people in the system already... I've got a very sound knowledge base now of most of the issues that would arise. It's reinforced my desire to be that person who can help someone.”

— Expert Citizen

“I'd got this notion in my head... which was if I ever go for a job I'd have to tell them, well for the last 15 years I haven't worked because I've been drinking etc; that would be a massive negative. Whereas this has actually gone in my favour because they would regard it as experience... My past as an active addict in my eyes was a negative, but to them it was a positive, and I'd never looked at it in that way.”

— Support worker, Housing First and Expert Citizen

“I was in the system for 10 years and I had this huge chip on my shoulder... I got into a very, very dark place where it was easy for me to criticise services. The thing about the Learning Programme and working with some of the people from those services has helped me to alleviate the myth that I was thinking and my one point of view that was very negative and I thought people were only doing it as a job... so being a part of the Learning Programme helped me to eradicate that and get a more balanced viewpoint of what actually is going on. Just that alone helped with my recovery.”

— Community Development Coordinator, VOICES and Expert Citizen



Expert Citizens also highlighted the broader impacts of their participation in the Learning Programmes:

- The inclusive and non-hierarchical nature of Learning Programme sessions, which encourage and value the contribution of those with lived experience, can have a very positive impact on self-confidence and self-worth
- Expert Citizens underline the huge boost to their confidence derived from standing up in front of a group to share their stories and contributing to the learning and development of other volunteers
- The involvement of Expert Citizens in the delivery of training can also have an important effect on other volunteers with lived experience who are participating in sessions
- The effects on Expert Citizens' lives of being heard, overcoming anxiety and boosting self-confidence can be transformative

“I felt good, I felt proud of myself, especially because it's something that I've never done.”

— Project Assistant, Housing First Stoke-on-Trent and Expert Citizen

“Being part of a Learning Programme from being where I was to where I am now has changed me as a person for the better and I hope that more people can go on that journey.”

— Expert Citizen

“It's given me confidence... it's given me the ability to re-engage with society.”

— Community Development Coordinator, VOICES and Expert Citizen

5.3 Organisational impacts

5.3.1 Impacts on organisational culture and practice

A number of stakeholders identified immediate changes made as a result of individuals or groups of staff attending VOICES' Learning Programme sessions. For example, one facilitator shared feedback they had received from staff in frontline roles about the immediate positive impacts of using conflict avoidance and resolution techniques they had learnt in a VOICES' Learning Programme session. The Psychologically Informed Environments (PIEs) and Trauma Informed Care (TIC) courses were repeatedly mentioned as sessions which provided organisations with ideas about immediate changes they could make to their practice.

The impact of bespoke workshops co-delivered by Expert Citizens on some organisations' culture and practice has been striking. The following changes have been made as a result of the series of workshops delivered at Royal Stoke University Hospital A&E Department in 2018:

- Information about services including rough sleepers' services, housing advice, drug and alcohol misuse support, GP registration, social care and mental health services has been placed in Homelessness Resource boxes to be accessed by A&E staff and shared with patients
- VOICES provided a 'Quick Reference Guide' for A&E staff on how to refer someone with no fixed abode to homelessness/housing services
- A new alert is being added to the patient electronic system to flag that a person is at risk due to homelessness
- Mental health assessments are now completed in A&E; the mental health liaison team work 24 hours a day
- The hospital has recently gained funding for training sessions in PIEs that will be co-designed and co-delivered by a national expert, VOICES and Expert Citizens CIC

Several other organisations have also recognised the value of them commissioning in-depth training and consultancy programmes of their own following their organisation's attendance of VOICES Learning Programme sessions on particular topics:

- Staffordshire Police have engaged the national expert who leads VOICES' training on compulsive hoarding to deliver the training to PCSOs
- Staffordshire Police are also increasingly incorporating lived experience into their in-house training as a result of their involvement in the VOICES Learning Programme
- Brighter Futures commissioned the national expert who leads VOICES' training on PIEs and TIC to design an implementation and action plan and deliver mandatory training to all staff to embed an understanding of TIC and how to create PIEs

5.3.2 Impact on cross-organisational working

There was a widespread perception among stakeholders that the shared learning environment at the core of VOICES' Learning Programme contributes to greater cooperation and a more flexible and solutions-focused approach to service delivery by organisations and agencies supporting customers with complex needs in Stoke-on-Trent. This greater degree of collaborative working is perceived as being achieved through a number of mechanisms:

- The personal connections made through participating in training sessions with colleagues from other organisations supporting customers with complex needs across the city
- The greater understanding of the context within which professionals in other services and organisations are operating, which, along with wider and deeper professional networks, contribute to the breaking down of silos
- A shared understanding of expert opinion and best practice in relation to legislative and policy developments and current issues experienced by customers with multiple needs
- A shared empathy for those experiencing multiple needs derived from the centrality of lived experience to the VOICES Learning Programme

Some stakeholders suggested that because of financial constraints in-house training has tended to proliferate in recent years, making the cross-organisation approach of the VOICES' Learning Programme more unusual, and therefore increasing its potential impact. Stakeholders shared a number of examples of cross-organisational working that they felt had been facilitated by participation in VOICES' Learning Programme.

“The PIE and TIC sessions are really good sessions for forging relationships with likeminded agencies and sharing learning and things like that.”

— Operations Manager, Concrete

“There's kind of an expectation that we work in a different way. People come together on the training and that creates a little bit of a movement I would say... There are people who are much more receptive now to working in flexible ways with people with multiple and complex needs. And much less likely than they used to be to blame or label people.”

— Manager, Housing First, Stoke-on-Trent

“There is communication between different organisations who might have previous worked in silos.”

— Training Facilitator

“People who are experiencing compulsive hoarding, that's very much changed. You would simply go down eviction, you would go round and tell people they're going to burn to death, and then issue warnings, final letter, get them out. That really doesn't happen at all now... There's a woman locally who was compulsively hoarding, and the fire officer who went to see her had done the training... She lives in a village for older people, they [staff members] had been on the training as well... They all spoke to each other about how they had done the training and how they were going to work differently with her... Her support worker contacted me to say that 'she's started cleaning her flat.’”

— Training Facilitator

“We have duty teams called First Contact – social workers that work on those teams... in areas where issues of homelessness and drug addiction are higher, they now have really good connections with VOICES and the hostels because they’ve been on quite a bit of training with them and have developed those relationships and work very well together.”

– Social Care Development Manager, Stoke-on-Trent City Council

5.4 The Learning Programme’s contribution to systems change

The evaluation demonstrates the way in which the Learning Programme is contributing to systems change in Stoke-on-Trent. VOICES takes both ‘ground up’ and ‘top down’ approaches to systems change:

- Ground up: This work is “about the hearts and minds, attitudes and culture, custom and practice of people at the frontline” of working with people with multiple needs²²
- Top-down: For VOICES to achieve a lasting legacy of systems change, the project requires senior-level commitment to changing policy and strategy

The VOICES Partnership Board and the Multi Agency Resolution Group (MARG) were widely viewed by interviewees as leading systems change at a strategic level, with the Learning Programme ensuring that this is mirrored by support and training for staff to deliver on commitments to change. Interviewees felt that the Learning Programme primarily supports ‘ground up’ systems change, increasing skills, confidence and motivation in the workforce, illustrated in sections 5.1 and 5.3 above. There are, in addition, particular examples of the Learning Programme having a particular influence on senior stakeholders with strategic influence; board members and chief executives have attended a number of masterclass sessions; senior stakeholders are routinely reached through VOICES’ bespoke workshops; and there is increasing interest in the design of bespoke workshops for senior managers, such as one planned for North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust Board in early 2020. The February 2020 live performance event In Plain Sight had significant success in reaching key local influencers.

“There’s sometimes a risk that there’s buy-in just at the strategic level, but actually the VOICES Learning Programme means that there is the buy-in and the tools to do it at the frontline level.”

– Manager, Housing First, Stoke-on-Trent

“Small change in cups won’t solve a homelessness problem, but small changes in attitudes, behaviours and procedures can make a huge difference to someone’s support”

– Sharon Sharman



²² VOICES (2017) VOICES Systems Change prospectus

5.5 The legacy of the Learning Programme

When asked what the legacy of the Learning Programme would be at the end of the VOICES project in 2022, stakeholders again suggested that the programme's role must be viewed alongside the other structures and work of VOICES. It was argued that in combination with these, the programme's legacy would be:

- A better understanding of the lived experience of people with multiple needs and embedded co-production of training with those with lived experience
- Contributing to the willingness and ability of organisations to work together flexibly to deliver services and find solutions
- Increasing the skills and expertise of professionals working with customers with complex needs, and empowering them to effectively advocate for clients and strive for accountability
- Fostering a culture of embedded shared learning, so that organisations across Stoke-on-Trent continue to come together for peer and expert-led learning opportunities

Some stakeholders raised concerns about the impact of VOICES' Learning Programme coming to an end and suggested areas that need careful consideration in order to effectively secure its potential legacy.

- Organisations' training budgets and infrastructure may need to be reviewed, particularly those for whom the VOICES Learning Programme has met a substantial proportion of their training needs
- Stakeholders are very keen to secure the future of the shared learning environment created by VOICES' Learning Programme. Several suggested that the mechanisms for achieving this are bound up with the larger question of how the structures of partnership working currently led by VOICES will continue
- Some stakeholders emphasised that it would be important to continue to secure training that is highly responsive to current training needs and of the highest quality, suggesting that organisations could jointly commission training specifically tailored to focus on those with multiple needs led by local and national expert practitioners
- This raises questions around the logistical and financial mechanisms of sustaining such a programme without an organisation to fill VOICES' current role in funding, scoping, designing, managing and delivering the programme and acting as a centre of expertise for the provision of training for those involved with supporting customers with multiple needs



6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

The VOICES Learning Programme is a highly successful model, facilitating city-wide learning for those involved in supporting customers with multiple needs in Stoke-on-Trent. This research has identified meaningful impacts of the programme on individual professionals and Expert Citizens, as well as aggregate-level impacts in terms of organisational and cultural practice and cross-organisational collaboration.

The success of the programme derives from three key factors:

- The creation of a shared-learning environment across organisations working with people with multiple needs
- The provision of high-quality learning opportunities that are current, tailored to participants' needs and delivered by engaging and skilled trainers
- The centrality of lived experience to the programme

The impact of the programme includes:

- Increased collaboration and partnership between organisations and individuals
- Improved practices within many organisations
- Increased confidence and skills among individuals working with people facing multiple needs

Evidence presented in the report shows that the Learning Programme has contributed to Stoke-on-Trent becoming a 'Learning City' in the field of multiple needs. This is due to the reach of the Learning Programme across sectors and organisations, the scale of training delivered, the co-production of the programme with Expert Citizens, and the scope of subjects covered in the programme.

The VOICES project will end in 2022, raising questions about the legacy of the Learning Programme; how to ensure its impacts are embedded; and the future of city-wide learning in relation to supporting those with multiple needs.



6.2 Recommendations

Recommendations for VOICES and partners:

- Organisations should continue to encourage and enable staff to attend Learning Programme opportunities given their demonstrable impact at an organisational and city level
- VOICES should continue to seek greater attendance of health sector colleagues and senior staff; this may be through promotion of the existing programme or through targeted opportunities – for example, leadership masterclasses or bespoke support to smaller groups
- VOICES should ensure that the remaining period of the Learning Programme continues to prioritise the three elements of success highlighted in the evaluation: shared learning experience; high-quality provision; and lived experience at the heart of the programme
- The Partnership Board, led by VOICES, should develop an options paper which outlines a proposed sustainability plan for city-wide learning and a corresponding exit plan for when VOICES comes to an end
- The breadth and scale of the Learning Programme is likely to be unique across the Fulfilling Lives areas, VOICES should promote this element of the programme, including to funders at the National Lottery Community Fund

Recommendations for other areas or organisations arranging training on multiple needs:

- Incorporate the three key success factors from VOICES' Learning Programmes: shared learning experience; high-quality provision; and lived experience at the heart of the programme
- Undertake ongoing consultation with services and customers to identify bespoke learning needs that will influence the design and delivery of a shared learning programme
- Put on bespoke sessions for senior leaders and deliver them at a time and a place that is convenient to them
- Consider how cross-organisational training will impact on internal training offers to avoid duplication and ensure engagement (e.g. VOICES' Learning Programme avoids standard topics for individual organisations' in-house training)
- Consider from the outset practical issues that have been reflected in this report, including promotion of opportunities; booking tools; venues; and administrative support



Appendix 1: Stakeholder interview participants

Telephone interviews with stakeholders were undertaken during November and December 2019 and January 2020. Nine staff and volunteers from VOICES, Expert Citizens CIC and Brighter Futures were interviewed. Interviews were also conducted with two training facilitators. A further seven interviews took place with stakeholders whose organisations have commissioned or participated in learning opportunities provide by VOICES' Learning Programme.

Table 1: Interviews with stakeholders with direct involvement with VOICES and/or the citywide Learning Programme

Name	Role	Organisation
Jo Cutts	Project Assistant, Housing First, Stoke-on-Trent	Expert Citizens CIC
Lee Dale	Community Development Coordinator	VOICES, Volunteer Expert Citizen
Danny Daniels	Support worker, Housing First, Stoke-on-Trent	Expert Citizens CIC
Helena Evans	Chief Executive	Brighter Futures
Rachele Hine	Operations Director	Expert Citizens CIC
Wendi Knox	Student – Return to study (health)	Stoke-on-Trent College Volunteer Expert Citizen
Phil Parkes	Expert Citizen	Expert Citizens CIC
Sharon Sharman	Learning and Evaluation Manager	VOICES
Jane Turner	Manager, Housing First, Stoke-on-Trent	Brighter Futures

Table 2: Interviews with other stakeholders in VOICES' citywide Learning Programme

Name	Role	Organisation
Bridget Bennett	Social Care Development Manager	Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Dawn Cooke	Housing Options Lead	Housing Solutions Service – Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Sarah Forshaw	Operations Manager	Concrete – previously ARCH
Helen Jones	Manager	Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Board
Di Malkin	Thematic Lead for Vulnerability and Mental Health	Staffordshire Police
Claire Ritchie	Training facilitator	No One Left Out
Rachael Smith	Probation Officer / Senior Lead for Housing and Welfare, Napo Vice Chair	The Staffordshire and West Midlands CRC Ltd. Part of the Reducing Reoffending Partnership
Steven Talbot	Training facilitator	Steven Talbot Consultancy
Lesley Whittaker	Patient Safety Manager	Harplands Hospital

Accredited Courses

Learning Opportunity	Format	Description	Number of Sessions Run	Number of Places Booked
Supervising First Aid for Mental Health	<p>2-day course</p> <p>The Award in Supervising First Aid for Mental Health (England, Wales, Northern Ireland RQF level 3 / Scotland SCQF level 6)</p> <p>Aimed at managers, supervisors, leaders, teachers or anyone with an interest in mental health, mental health culture within a workplace or setting and knowing how to provide support for things such as stress.</p>	Learners will cover the full syllabus of the mental health awareness and first aid courses, and will also gain a deep understanding of a wider range of mental health conditions and the professional treatments available.	2	23

Non-accredited Courses

Learning Opportunity	Format	Description	Number of Sessions Run	Number of Places Booked
Harness Your Potential: Building Resilience and Emotional Wellbeing	<p>2-day course</p> <p>Provided by Homeless Link</p>	Self-development training programme, focused on empowering individuals to increase their resilience through nurturing emotional wellbeing and self-efficacy.	3	46
Navigating Benefits	<p>8 sessions over 4 half days</p> <p>Provided by SNSCAB</p> <p>Appropriate for frontline staff</p>	A bespoke course aimed at services supporting people who present with a variety of needs and who may move in and out of services for short and long periods of time. The course provides understanding, knowledge and skills to frontline workers, enabling them to quickly and effectively support customers through transitions with finances and also appeals processes.	1	16

Masterclasses

Learning Opportunity	Format	Description	Number of Sessions Run	Number of Places Booked
Advocacy Skills	<p>1-day workshop Appropriate for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers and frontline staff from any homeless service Staff from other sectors who have contact with vulnerable people who may require advocacy support 	<p>Covering how to be aware of and develop people's own style with the legal framework in mind and to understand when they should and should not be the person to offer advocacy. The course encourages strong reflection and self-awareness to ensure individual styles are effective.</p>	2	32
Alcohol IBA, NPS and Naloxone	<p>1-day workshop Delivered in partnership by CDAS (Community Drug and Alcohol Service)</p>	<p>Alcohol I.B.A. Identification and Brief Advice NPS: New Psychoactive Substances: awareness session of types and effects Naloxone: used to treat an opiate / narcotic overdose in an emergency situation</p>	3	55
Drug Related Deaths	<p>1-day workshop Delivered by KFx Appropriate for: drugs workers, hospital staff and paramedics, police, service managers, frontline staff and peer-educators: previous drugs training will be required</p>	<p>Looks at how workers and organisations can assess local trends, establish strategies to reduce deaths, and work with users and other services to achieve this reduction.</p>	3	53
Homelessness, Multiple Needs and the Law	<p>2-day workshop Co-delivered by Shelter</p>	<p>Covering laws and legislation relating to multiple needs and links between fields of support. Sessions include practical exercises and case law examples. Dual diagnosis, Mental Health Act, structural links between community care, mental health services and homelessness legislation, access to community care services – the Care Act 2014, homelessness under part VII Housing Act and vulnerability.</p>	3	54
In My Shoes	<p>Half-day workshop Delivered by Expert Citizens CIC Session co-designed and supported by Rideout (Creative Arts for Rehabilitation) and B Arts.</p>	<p>Using creative and interactive methodologies based on lived experiences of multiple needs to explore how personal histories influence the way that people see the world.</p>	1	29

Masterclasses Continued

Learning Opportunity	Format	Description	Number of Sessions Run	Number of Places Booked
Inspiring Change: Motivational Interviewing	2-day learner-led workshop Delivered by Steven Talbot Consultancy	The principles behind motivational interviewing. Exploring ambivalence and how to reduce resistance and sustain talk. Analysing what is meant by 'active listening'. Describing cycles of change. Exploring 'change talk' and boosting the intrinsic need for change. Discovering where dangerous assumptions can lead. Exploring theory of 'roadblocks'. Taking part in motivational interviewing	4	65
LOST: Recognising and Responding to Loneliness	Half-day workshop Delivered by Steven Talbot Consultancy. Codesigned and created with customers.	Recognising loneliness and isolation. Characteristics of a person experiencing loneliness who is isolated and removing themselves from society. How to respond to customers who are isolated. The need for psychological support and guidance. Cycles of shame and a shameful self-image. How we can encourage and support engagement. Positive outcomes for people who embrace company and companionship. Support available to people in the local area	4	71
Navigating Mental Health Services	1-day workshop Delivered by Homeless Link. For frontline staff, keyworkers and their managers who regularly work with clients who have mental ill-health	if you support people with mental health needs, the process of getting help from specialist services can be confusing. This course helps participants build relationships with local mental health teams and shows how to make appropriate referrals to the right service.	2	35
Mental Health Awareness	Half-day workshop Delivered by North Staffs MIND No previous mental health training is required	Definitions of mental health and its universality. Identification, classification and treatment of some mental health conditions. Causes, risk and resilience factors in relation to developing mental ill-health. Signs and symptoms in relation to stress, anxiety and depression. Ways of managing mental health (own and others).	1	14
Multiple Exclusion, Homelessness and Social Care Law	3-day course Delivered by CASCAIDr through legal experts in the field of social care law and adult safeguarding.	Key aspects of the Care Act 2014. From assessment and eligibility to lawful care planning. Considering the resource scare contexts experienced by staff. Addresses the interface between homelessness, addiction, criminal justice with adult safeguarding law, policy and practice.	2	43

Masterclasses Continued

Learning Opportunity	Format	Description	Number of Sessions Run	Number of Places Booked
Psychologically Informed Environments	1-day workshop Delivered by Claire Ritchie, No One Left Out	This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the concept and implementation of a Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE). PIE is an approach to supporting people out of chronic homelessness, in particular those who have experienced childhood trauma such as abuse or neglect.	2	40
Prisoners' Housing Rights	1-Day workshop 5 CPD hours Facilitated by Shelter Suitable for: homelessness and allocation officers; link workers based in prisons, those giving advice to prisoners and link or liaison officers based in local authorities and housing associations	This course equips delegates with the skills and knowledge to provide assistance to people from remand through to sentencing and release. Heavy emphasis is placed on the importance of sustaining tenancies and the range of available tactics. Delegates develop an understanding of the assessment of vulnerability under the homelessness legislation and consider the position of those facing homelessness upon discharge.	2	34
Suicide safeTALK	Half-day workshop Delivered by North Staffs MIND	Since its development in 2006, safeTALK has been used in over 20 countries around the world. More than 200 selectable video vignettes have been used to tailor the programme's audio-visual component for diverse audiences. safeTALK trained helpers are an important part of suicide-safer communities, working alongside intervention resources to identify and avert suicide risks. (LivingWorks 2016)	1	15
Trapped and Drowning in my Things: Compulsive Hoarding	Half-day workshop Delivered by Steven Talbot Consultancy. Codedigned and created with customers. Appropriate for anyone who is dealing directly with people in their home; be that homeowner, private rented, local authority, social housing or hostels: Social Care, NHS, Organisational Leaders, Housing Officers, Frontline staff	The aim of the session is for the participant to identify and respond to hoarding behaviour, ensuring that a multi-agency approach is developed to ensure that each hoarding case can be dealt with in an effective and coordinated way.	2	35
Trauma Informed Care	Masterclass 1-day session Delivered by Claire Ritchie, No One Left Out	This course considers the impact trauma may have on an individual and offers a different way of understanding behaviour we can sometimes find challenging. It can be used as a framework for creating a Psychologically Informed Environment.	2	40

Masterclasses Continued

Learning Opportunity	Format	Description	Number of Sessions Run	Number of Places Booked
Trending Drugs: Novel Psychoactives and (Re)emergent Drugs	Masterclass 1-day session Delivered by KFx	<p>The objectives of the session are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> List key new or re-emergent compounds being used in the UK Recount key legal issues for emergent drugs including the PSA Describe how the Dark Web is used to procure substances and implications Locate old and new compounds within a categorisation framework Explain the pharmacological action of key types of compound Ascribe key facts to specific new compounds Describe core principals in working with unknown compounds Describe harm reduction interventions applicable to newer compounds List key sources of information for new and emergent compounds 	3	53
Understanding Grief and Loss	Masterclass Half-day workshop Delivered by North Staffs MIND	<p>The course covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring learners' own losses Consideration of grief theory Complicated and disenfranchised grief Ways of supporting people who have experienced bereavement 	1	15
Understanding Self Injury	Masterclass 1-day session Delivered by Homeless link For all staff members, including managers, volunteers and carers who work with people who self-injure or are affected by the issues brought up by self-injury.	<p>By the end of the session you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be able to define self-injury and understand how it differs from self-harm, suicide and parasuicide Be aware of the myths and prejudices surrounding self-injury Know about the underlying issues that can cause or trigger self-injury Understand the practical and emotional support needs of clients who self-injure and also staff who work closely with them Know which interventions work best for those that don't Gain greater understanding of clients and staff interventions through case studies Have developed an outline for an organisational Self-Injury Policy Know about statutory and non-statutory resources for supporting people who self-injure 	2	35

Conferences, events and bespoke workshops during 2019

Month	Event	Topic	Approx no Delegates	Audience
January/ August	Stoke and Staffordshire Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board	Understanding Barriers to Engagement - Response to Serious Case Review	360 across 7 sessions	Mix: Safeguarding Leads, Mental Health Leads, Social Care leads, Housing and Homelessness Leads, NHS Combined Leads, Local Councillors, Local Authority Executives
March	Masterclass Half-day workshop Delivered by North Staffs MIND	The course covers: Exploring learners' own losses Consideration of grief theory Complicated and disenfranchised grief Ways of supporting people who have experienced bereavement	60	Mix across local authorities – Social Workers, Assistant Directors, Safeguarding staff, Chief Social Worker
March	Homeless Link Rough Sleeping Conference	Multiple exclusion homelessness and adult social care	60	Mix – members from housing and homelessness organisations and local authorities
April	Staffordshire Police - training day for local PCSOs	Care Act Toolkit	15	PCSOs
June	Brighter Futures Workshop	Multiple Exclusion Homelessness and adult social care	30	Mix of frontline, management and senior management
June	Shelter – staff training day	Multiple Exclusion Homelessness and adult social care	20	Outreach Workers and Managers
June	St. Georges Hospital, Stafford	Understanding Barriers to Engagement	30	Mental Health Leads
July	Homeless Link's Annual Conference	Multiple exclusion homelessness and adult social care	70	Mix – members from housing and homelessness organisations and local authorities
July	North Staffordshire CCG	Primary Health Care – Fair and Equal Access	50	Primary Health Care Leads, GPs, Practice Managers
July/August	Brighter Futures Workshops (x2)	Multiple exclusion homelessness and adult social care	40 across 2 sessions	Mix of frontline, management and senior management
August	Court of Good Practice	Presenting cases of Positive Practice	12	VOICES team and Expert Citizens CIC
Sept/Oct/ Nov in Birmingham, Leeds & London	Local Government Association's Homelessness and Safeguarding Conference (x4)	Sharing learning from stroke: The MARG Care Act Toolkit	800 across 4 sessions	Mix – local authorities: housing, social care, safeguarding, NHS, VCISO
September	Midlands and Lancashire Equality and Inclusion Commissioning Support Unit	Homelessness and Health Inequality – local and national	10	Full team away day including Head of Service and Team Manager
October	Stoke and Staffordshire Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board	Findings from Safeguarding Adult Reviews were homelessness was a factor	25	Board members
October	Homelessness Reduction Board	Findings from Safeguarding Adult Reviews were homelessness was a factor	10	HRA board members
October	North Staffs Combined Healthcare NHS Trust	Understanding barriers to engagement	20	Mix – frontline, Senior Managers and Chair of the Board
November/ December	RIPFA Partnership Conference	Complexities of housing and social care	10	Mix – local authorities Senior Housing and Social Care



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