

Impact Review 2016/17

My Life My Choice



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Foreword from the Foundation for Social Improvement (FSI): The MLMC Member Journey



My Life My Choice (MLMC) members are diverse and varied, and participate in the charity's projects and activities in many different ways. Whether it is the person who tunes into Sting Radio or visits the Stingray nightclub, or a group member accessing and giving peer support, or an expert by experience working directly with agencies to improve their understanding and practice for people with learning disabilities – all play a vital role.

MLMC actively strives to enable members to find their voice. From the moment a person engages with the charity, they are supported by other members – their peers - and are nudged onwards and onwards till they reach their own level of activity and participation that works *for them*. For some, this is feeling able to speak during a local group meeting and share their views. Others become Champions, using their voice with a wider audience to create positive change in society. Others still will participate as volunteers, trainers and 'experts by experience' improving the experience and lives of people with learning disabilities and those around them – their families and carers, professionals who work with them and the wider community. (See diagram on page 21 for the full range of opportunities). The power of this model cannot be understated – MLMC is truly a user-led organisation championing the voice of people with learning disabilities so that they have choice and control over their own lives.

During our research we heard many stories illustrating the impact of MLMC's work. One woman joined her local monthly self-advocacy group and was too shy to speak at first... 8 years later not only has she spoken up at many meetings but she has gone on to be a trainer in the Power Up programme and eventually the Chair of trustees. This is the impact we saw time and time again, once the members connect, they progress - and for many this means becoming paid workers as well. Not only are people with learning disabilities running training courses for health care professionals in hospitals or to the Oxfordshire Constabulary, but they are being recognised for their expertise and insight and being paid to do so. It is a very powerful and inspiring change of dynamic!

We are pleased to present MLMC's Impact Review 2016/17 and hope you enjoy reading about their activities and achievements.

(Janine Edwards, Head of Consultancy & Development, The FSI)

Introduction

MLMC commissioned the Foundation for Social Improvement (the FSI) to undertake an independent assessment of its programmes and services in order to produce an impact review of the work that MLMC does.

The aim of this report is to assess progress against planned activities and outputs, and to begin to identify perceived outcomes (changes) for MLMC members, for people with learning disabilities, for local agencies/authorities, and for the general public as a whole. This report aims to answer the following questions about MLMC's projects:

1. What is the problem MLMC is trying to address?
2. What does MLMC do to address it?
3. What is MLMC achieving?
4. How does MLMC know what MLMC is achieving?
5. What is MLMC learning, and how can MLMC improve?

This report also seeks to evaluate the social value created by MLMC, whether this is through direct income to people with learning disabilities, reduced pressures on transport and health costs for local commissioners or through increasing the profile and awareness of people with learning disabilities.

Methodology

This report forms part of a broader Impact Consultancy project:

1. Production of an impact map: identifying outputs and outcomes across all MLMC projects, as experienced by a range of stakeholders;
2. Production of an internal report summarising the impact measurement framework and improvements for data collection and analysis;
3. Production of an Impact Review which can be used with a variety of external audiences.

The FSI completed the following activities:

- Review of existing MLMC materials including strategy 2016-2019, case for support, annual review;
- Review of testimonials, case studies, letters of support and press coverage;
- Review of qualitative and quantitative data collected by the MLMC team;
- Desk research;
- Staff workshop and trustee workshop sessions;
- Stakeholder interviews: Bryan Michell, Charity Coordinator; Jan Walmsley and Chris Locke (MLMC trustee helpers); local authority commissioners and Ann Nursey (ex-commissioner); Toby Staveley (CEO of local charity).

About My Life My Choice

MLMC raises the self-esteem and quality of life for people with learning disabilities by providing volunteering, training, employment and social opportunities. This disadvantaged group face multiple levels of deprivation and the charity works to help its members to combat isolation and to lead more fulfilling lives.



The charity is the only independent, user-led, self-advocacy organisation of its kind in Oxfordshire. The membership, spread throughout the county, has grown to over 550 since the formation of the charity in 1998.

Vision and Mission

MLMC's vision is a world where people with learning disabilities are treated without prejudice, and are able to have choice and control over their own lives.

MLMC's mission is threefold:

1. To make sure that there is independent support for people with learning disabilities to have their say, claim their rights and to take control of their own lives;
2. To make sure that the views of people with learning disabilities are taken seriously by both professionals in the services they use and the wider public;
3. To 'Power Up' their lives so they can make a positive contribution to society.

Projects – what MLMC does to deliver its mission

1. Champions: people with learning disabilities have the opportunity and confidence to use their voice for positive change in society.
2. Groups: giving members a chance to meet up, make new friends, get out of their homes, get advice, practice self-advocacy, talk about their interests and learn new skills.
3. Power Up: the charity's team of trainers with learning disabilities who earn money whilst training their peers and sector professionals.
4. Travel Buddy: paid trainers with learning disabilities supporting their peers to travel independently.
5. Inspections: paid 'experts by experience' inspecting and improving services.
6. Stingray: the only regular user-led nightclub for people with learning disabilities in Oxfordshire.
7. Sting Radio: a fun, innovative radio show developing DJs and projecting the voice of people with learning disabilities in Oxfordshire.

Review of My Life My Choice Projects

Champions



This work is core to MLMC; making sure that people with learning disabilities have a voice and that their views are taken seriously by wider society. The project supports and empowers people with learning disabilities (Champions) to better engage with and influence decision makers and hold them to account through meetings, consultations, lobbying and campaigning.

The Champions serve on boards (e.g. Thames Valley Police Independent Advisory Board, Oxfordshire Transforming Care Board) and attend consultations and meetings (e.g. local authority Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee) in their efforts to improve services.

Champions make a real difference in this day to day work to help marginalised people with learning disabilities to be less subject to discrimination from public attitudes, laws, policies and services.

Champions also campaign for the rights of themselves and others with a learning disability: to make services more accessible, support more available, and their views taken more seriously by professionals and the general public. Through their participation in campaigns on topics such as hate crime, health checks, and benefits, Champions are able to influence policy and increase their confidence to speak up.

What MLMC said it would do

The MLMC strategy set out the following planned developments for Champions:

- Engage and develop 2 new Champions per year
- Develop and maintain existing network of Champions
- Maintain existing relationships with Oxfordshire MPs and Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Members
- Run at least one high profile campaign aimed at improving the lives of people with learning disabilities
- 12 articles in local newspapers, 4 appearances on local TV and 4 appearances on local radio
- Increase social media following from Twitter and Facebook.

What MLMC did

- 28 Champions in the year (5 new Champions)
- 12 Champion development workshops held
- 78 blog posts for the MLMC website
- 21 blog posts for the Quality Compliance Systems (QCS) website
- 13 user-led videos with over 900 combined views
- 3 campaigns and one campaign trek
- 12 articles in local newspapers,
- 2 appearances on local TV and 2 on local radio
- 3,200 Twitter followers
- 823 friends on Facebook
- 13 letters to MPs and 3 meetings with MPs
- 3 visits to the Houses of Parliament
- 6 letters to leaders of Oxfordshire councils and 4 meetings with leader of Oxford City Council
- 2 Champions paid to sit on Oxfordshire Transforming Care Board.



What MLMC achieved

The activities and outputs of the Champions project resulted in a range of outcomes and positive impact.

The campaign work of the Champions resulted in the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group funding a MLMC user-led project promoting the take up of health checks for people with learning disabilities.

The MLMC contribution to the Justice for LB campaign has resulted in drastic changes: the removal of the Southern Health CEO and members of the board; a new service provider for learning disability health in Oxfordshire is now in place; valuable assets for people of Oxfordshire have been secured and, the Health & Safety Executive has successfully prosecuted Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust.

"MLMC is extremely well known for its valuable work, not only in Oxfordshire but on a national level and it gives Oxfordshire County Council great pride to be associated with this organisation. We are genuinely quite amazed to hear of MLMC working so effectively with organisations such as NICE, NDTI, CQC, NHS England and Oxfordshire CCG; it is also hugely satisfying to hear of MLMC Champions visiting 10 Downing Street, Buckingham Palace and carrying out campaign and research work overseas."

Kate Terroni, Director for Adult Services, Oxfordshire County Council



MLMC have attained a better and more inclusive service for people with learning disabilities.

The Champions project has spread a greater awareness of the ESA permitted work scheme, and the expectations and profile of people with learning disabilities in the public has been raised through positive media representation.

Most valuably, Champions involved in the project have been empowered to speak up, so increasing their confidence, improving their skills and are less isolated.

Future plans

In 2017/18 MLMC will focus on the following priorities:

- Expand campaigns for better health and paid work for people with learning disabilities
- Campaign for an end to people being locked up in care and treatment units
- More Champion visits to Houses of Parliament
- Aim for national media coverage.

Self-advocacy Groups

MLMC runs 10 monthly self-advocacy groups throughout Oxfordshire for 130 regular attendees. The groups provide safe but challenging opportunities for people to meet up and be part of their community, as well as learning valuable new skills.

The groups are sometimes the only opportunities members have to share their stories and feel understood by peers. Meetings address issues of loneliness and exclusion where beneficiaries discuss, learn about, and practice such things as safety, art, how to volunteer, independence, self-improvement and how to speak up for themselves.

The MLMC self-advocacy groups, which keep isolated people active and socialising, cost around £150 per person per year and according to "Oxfordshire Uncovered" (Oxfordshire Community Foundation 2016) result in monetary savings of £300 per person per year just by reducing depression.

This means that for every pound spent on services such as these, society could be saving £2 – as well as helping communities to build stronger links, and promoting genuine wellbeing.

The self-advocacy groups are the 'life blood' of the organisation. Many friendships have been made in the groups, and often group members go on to become involved in other MLMC projects and campaign work.

What MLMC said it would do

MLMC's strategy set out the following planned developments for groups:

- 10 financially stable adult groups, each with at least 10 regular attendees
- 3 financially stable young people's groups, each with at least 10 regular attendees
- Groups in total supporting 150 people (includes people who attended at least one group meeting in the year)
- Measurable group input into the 'voice' of the charity
- At least one independently funded training initiative delivered to each group each year
- Paid group co-facilitators with learning disabilities in place for all groups
- Create a powerful voice to contribute to MLMC campaign work
- Community fundraising by group members of £6,000 each year.



What MLMC did

MLMC has made considerable progress in their self-advocacy groups:

- 10 groups (one young and 9 adult) run on a monthly basis around the county
- 120 two-hour group meetings held in total
- 13 paid group co-facilitators with learning disabilities earning £2,400 pa
- Average attendance of 13 beneficiaries at each group
- Total of 153 who attended a group at any one time or more during the year
- Travel training undertaken and completed for all groups
- Group members raised £3,000 for the charity.

"I feel more confident since coming to the meetings. I love coming and feel safe here"

"I feel more like I can talk to people. At the meetings I feel I can say what I want"

"I've learnt that I am not alone. A lot of people go through the same thing and at the group meetings there are people I can talk to and turn to"

- Various group members

What MLMC achieved

The activities and outputs of the groups resulted in a range of outcomes and positive impact.

- Group members were empowered to speak up, increased their skills and confidence and were less isolated
- Co-facilitators of groups, all who have learning disabilities, developed skills including public speaking and facilitation, thus improving their employability

- Over 3,000 hours of respite for support workers and family carers were provided
- The groups provided a valuable structure and easy access to focus groups' in order for people with learning disabilities to be consulted and their voices heard.

Future plans

In 2017/18 MLMC will focus on the following priorities:

- Add one more group to make 11 in total.
- Increase overall group attendance by 10%

Travel Buddy



Travel is a barrier to people with learning disabilities fully participating in society and being in control of their own lives. The Travel Buddy scheme is a peer led project whereby paid Travel Buddy trainers with learning disabilities support their peers to travel independently.

The MLMC Travel Buddy trainers learn new skills and through training their peers and getting paid, gain a sense of achievement and self-worth and feel they are making a contribution within their local communities.

For the trainees, overcoming the barriers to independent travel can open up a whole range of new opportunities; socially to meet friends at the cinema, to go bowling, to meet for a drink or go out for a meal, and also as a prerequisite for getting and maintaining volunteering or paid work.

Notably, the scheme saves both the individuals and the tax payer money as the trainees who successfully learn how to travel independently no longer require more expensive travel support e.g. taxis or being picked up by minibus.

What MLMC said it would do

MLMC's strategy set out the following planned developments for Travel Buddy:

- To deliver at least six outreach training sessions per year to day services and/or schools

- To peer train at least 18 beneficiaries on a one-to-one basis per year to travel designated journeys independently
- To pay Travel Buddy trainers with learning disabilities at least £1,800 per year for their work by April 2019
- To raise £40,000 per year through Trusts & Foundations to support project costs
- To increase awareness of the project in order to attract a steady flow of beneficiaries.

What MLMC did

- 27 referrals to the scheme
- 18 people with learning disabilities successfully completed travel training
- 5 new Travel Buddy trainers recruited, trained, and DBS checked adding to the existing team of 5 – an increase of 100%
- 23 travel training workshops delivered to 235 people at MLMC self-advocacy groups, schools/colleges, and day services
- £32,000 raised through Trusts & Foundations to support the Travel Buddy project
- Supported 3 trustees to travel abroad for the first time to northern Spain to join a campaign for the rights of people with learning disabilities.

What MLMC achieved

Travel Buddy delivered for individuals and also has an impact on the wider public.

Individuals take journeys that they would not otherwise be able to make alone. This has increased their skills and confidence to travel alone, and ultimately increased their independence and resulted in less isolation.

There is a financial benefit too through decreased expenditure on travel costs: in 2016/17 the Travel Buddy programme delivered estimated recurring annual savings of £75,638 for beneficiaries, family carers, and for the local authority now that individuals can travel independently.

Travel Buddy trainers also benefited through developing their own skills and confidence. This can lead to improved employability prospects and gives an opportunity to engage with others outside of their group. In 2016/17 Travel Buddy trainers with learning disabilities were paid £1,960, increasing their income, self-esteem and own independence.

"I take the bus to work with Jackie (a volunteer trustee for MLMC). I see her as a co-worker, a fully participative member of society. This is in part because MLMC introduced the Travel Buddy scheme – it has cut the costs of transport but also means that people like me see people with learning disabilities on a day to day basis and it changes our perceptions."

Benedict Leigh, Deputy Director, Joint Commissioning at Oxfordshire County Council.

The Travel Buddy scheme enables people with learning disabilities to be more visible to the general public which is leading to a reduction in stigma and an improvement in people's attitudes.

Future plans

In 2017/18 MLMC will focus on the following priorities:

- Successfully train at least 20 beneficiaries
- Pay Travel Buddy trainers over £2,500
- Secure Big Lottery Funding for the 3 year period 2018/21.

Power Up



This is MLMC's training and consultancy wing. Members are paid as trainers and consultants. They use their knowledge of having a learning disability to train and inform professionals, and to increase understanding of learning disabilities by those who work in services.

The list of satisfied Power Up training clients include Oxfordshire GP surgeries, Hertfordshire University, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford University Hospitals Trust, the Department of Health, prison staff, carers, council workers and researchers.

Power up is very closely connected to MLMC's Champions' work and as such is core to what MLMC does. The project has historically shown itself capable of attracting fees and grant funding to be financially self-supporting.

What MLMC said it would do

The MLMC strategy set out the following planned developments for Power Up in 2016/17

- Train and develop the Power Up trainers
- To pay people with learning disabilities a total in excess of £1,500 pa
- Greater marketing and publicising of work
- To develop the MLMC Power Up webpage
- To develop film/digital media training work
- To develop and grow easy read translation service
- To generate £15,000 income from fees

- To deliver at least one programme of grant funded skills training to MLMC self-advocacy groups per year
- To attract grant funding of £10,000.

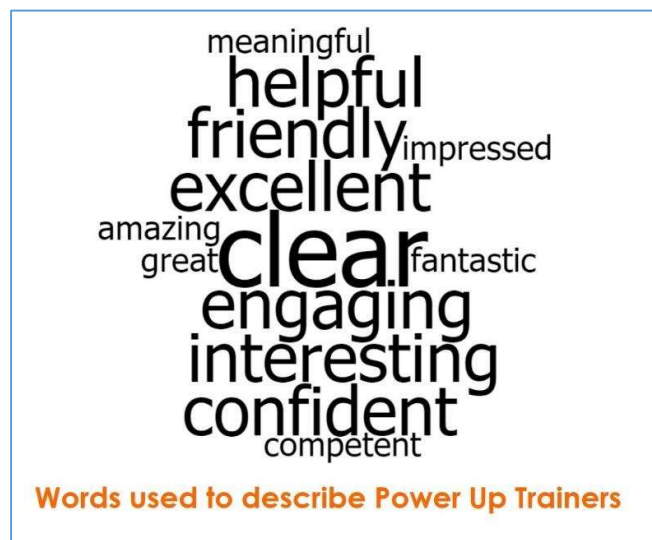
What MLMC did

- 23 training sessions delivered by people with learning disabilities
- 12 clients/customers who commissioned training
- 245 people trained
- 81 paid and 153 unpaid consultancy days delivered
- £25,917 generated from training and consultancy fees
- £25,995 grant funding secured
- £1,895 earned through Easy Read translation service.

What MLMC achieved

The Power Up project benefits trainers and those who participate in the training; it is mutually beneficial. It also positively impacts the wider sector.

10 people with learning disabilities delivered training and consultancy. They developed their skills particularly in public speaking, facilitation and training. They increased their confidence and their employability prospects.



There is also an increase in income to the MLMC trainers and consultants: in 2016/17 people with learning disabilities were paid £4,240 for their expertise and insight. Crucially, it also contributed to people with learning disabilities being involved in the co-production and improvement of services they access.

Training participants benefited from an improved awareness of the challenges facing people with learning disabilities, improving their professional practices. This has a trickle-down effect in to the wider sector, resulting in improved awareness within agencies and bodies of the challenges facing people with learning disabilities, and ultimately, trained staff providing better care and services.

Future plans

In 2017/18 MLMC will focus on the following priorities:

- To deliver 10% more training sessions and 10% more paid consultancy days.
- To increase training and consultancy fee income by 10%.
- To increase Easy Read fee income by 10%.
- To pay trainers and consultants with learning disabilities over £5,000.



"The Power Up service is great. They have trained GPs, hospital staff, the Police...the trainers give powerful examples in training from their own experience – it's a good training tool.

When we are procuring on a large scale we ask MLMC to design the questions. For example MLMC worked on the Framework for Supported Living – they were used as the professional voice of service users. We had 65 contracts – you couldn't do this without the level of trust we have with MLMC and their well-deserved reputation for excellence."

Quote from commissioner interview

"Before joining My Life My Choice I had never done a presentation in my life – something I've learnt to do by being a Power Up trainer. I have learnt that if I want to do something I can. Now I don't take notice of others who say I can't or won't be able to achieve things."

Nigel Taylor, Power Up Trainer.

Inspections

MLMC members are "experts by experience" and as such are paid as inspectors of health and social care services. The inspectors work on three main projects; Quality Checkers for Oxfordshire County Council, as part of NHS England's Care and Treatment Reviews, and as experts by experience for the Care Quality Commission.

With Oxfordshire County Council and Oxfordshire Family Support Network MLMC is working to improve quality, lives and services for people with learning disabilities and their families.



Inspectors check how good the lives of people who use services in Oxfordshire are. They do this by visiting people in their own homes and residential services, and spending time with people who use services to find out what it is like for them. It's a great example of local partnership work, and it provides an opportunity to both celebrate all the great work that is going on and to highlight and improve any negative issues.

In 2014 the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) invited MLMC to be involved in the NHS England Care and Treatment Reviews. MLMC members are paid to work on this national programme in a team of inspectors which include commissioners and clinical reviewers, to add a valuable, lived, personal view of what it's like to be in an Assessment and Treatment Unit.

In 2016 the charity began working with Choice Support as part of CQC's expert by experience programme. The experts are paid to inspect health and social care services across the Central Region helping to improve the quality of services delivered to people with learning disabilities.

All MLMC roles for people with learning disabilities (i.e. inspectors, trainers, Travel Buddies, and consultants) are paid above the Oxford living wage for their work. MLMC is a member of the Living Wage Foundation.

What MLMC said it would do

MLMC's strategy set out the following planned developments for Inspections:

- To increase the breadth of the three established areas of work
- To aim for £10,000 per annum to be paid directly to 'experts by experience'
- To make the project fully self-funded by end of 2017/18.

What MLMC did

- 14 inspectors with learning disabilities were recruited, trained and DBS checked. They earned a total of £6,765
- 34 local authority residential services inspected
- 5 CQC health and social care settings inspected
- 28 Care and Treatment Reviews completed
- 8 consultation days provided for clients
- £50,000 earned for the charity through inspection contracts and fees.

What MLMC achieved

The activities and outputs of MLMC Inspections resulted in a range of outcomes and positive impact.

Inspectors are empowered to speak up, and demonstrate increased skills and confidence. They improve their employability and are less isolated. They also earn income from delivering the service: in 2016/17 £6,765 was paid to inspectors with learning disabilities.

Like the MLMC Power Up work, inspection work leads to improved practice within agencies that are providing services for people with learning disabilities. This has a knock on impact in that service users have greater faith in the services that they are accessing.

"My Life My Choice quality checkers feed back to our contracts team, they are excellent at co-production."

Quote from Commissioner Interviews

Future plans

In 2017/18 MLMC aims to increase the number of inspections completed (10%), the amount of pay to inspectors (10%), and the total fee and contract income for the charity (10%).

Stingray Nightclub



Frustrated with their lack of late night social opportunities in Oxfordshire, members of MLMC started the Stingray nightclub.

Run by and for people with learning disabilities, Stingray takes place once a month on a Tuesday from 7pm to 10.30pm.

Established in 2007, Stingray now attracts over 100 people with learning disabilities to each event. A team of beneficiaries receive support to manage the project, taking care of financial matters, safety, and PR – they make all the key decisions. Oxford's "Plush Lounge" provides the venue free of charge, and MLMC receives an annual income through entrance fees from the project.

What MLMC said it would do

The MLMC strategy set out the following planned developments for Stingray:

- Continue with the Stingray club night each month.
- An average attendance of 110 by end of 2016/17.
- Keep entrance fee at £5 in order to keep it accessible to many income groups.

What MLMC did

- 12 club nights delivered.
- Total attendees in the year 1,140 - average attendance of 95 per club night.
- 23 volunteers with learning disabilities involved in running the event.
- Door fees of £4200 received
- Bursaries worth £1500 given to those without the financial means to attend.

What MLMC achieved



Individuals attending StingRay club nights are less isolated, have increased independence, improved self-esteem, increased physical and mental wellbeing – but most importantly have fun!

The DJs and volunteer management team have developed their skills and built confidence. Stingray also provides a respite opportunity for carers and support workers.

Future Plans

The MLMC plan for 2017/18 is to maintain the output and service at current levels but increase average attendance by 10%

"I LOVE StingRay Club because it's not a church hall. It's all BOOM BOOM BOOM, sticky floors, bouncers on the doors. It's the real thing!"

Councillor interview

"I'm a support worker and I've been to your Stingray nightclub a couple of times with the people I support. I think it's the best social event that exists for people with learning disabilities in Oxfordshire, so thanks for all your hard work organising and running it."

Alice Fixsen

Sting Radio

After finishing runner-up in the Big Lottery's Jubilee People's Millions competition in 2011, Sting Radio has developed into one of only three such innovative radio-shows nationally, and has broadcast regularly for 7 years. Originally funded by the Office for Disability and Oxfordshire County Council's Big Society Fund, the show features music, advice, information and comment by a rotating team of 24 DJs with learning disabilities. Local councillors, officials, politicians, and celebrities are interviewed by DJs with learning disabilities.

All the DJs have become more confident and have developed a strong ownership of Sting Radio, and are now actively involved and responsible for planning the show and making sure it runs to plan live on air.

The show is listened to by people with learning disabilities, family carers, support workers, and sector professionals.

What MLMC said it would do

The MLMC strategy set out the following planned developments for Sting Radio:

- Continue monthly, 2 hour long shows, with similar level of beneficiary and guest engagement
- Six high profile (e.g. MP) guests and six medium profile (e.g. Lead Commissioner) guests each year
- Engaging 50 people with learning disabilities each year as DJs, managers, or guests
- Funded during 2012 onwards largely from charity reserves.

What MLMC did

- 10 shows held.
- 27 members with learning disabilities engaged as DJs, managers or guests.
- 1 high profile guest.
- 2 medium profile guests.

What MLMC achieved

Sting Radio provides positive impact for DJs, listeners, the public sector, agencies and the wider sector. DJs develop skills, build confidence, improve physical and mental health, and have fun. Listeners are less isolated, have improved self-esteem and improved mental wellbeing, and also benefit from feeling represented. Also, people with learning disabilities are more visible to the general public – leading to reduced stigma and improved attitudes.

Future plans

MLMC's plan for 2017/18 is to maintain the output and service at current levels.

Conclusion: MLMC creating social value

In considering the social value created by MLMC, it is first important to recognise the context that they are working in. Only 7% of people with learning disabilities are in paid work or self-employed. 31% of households including a disabled person live in poverty, compared with 18% of households where no-one is disabled (Mencap, 2017). Over 50% of MLMC members come from the urban areas of Oxford, Banbury and Abingdon, with the majority of these living within deprived areas (as defined by the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation). People with learning disabilities tend to have smaller and more restricted social networks than people without a learning disability (Mencap, 2017).

MLMC is directly addressing both the root causes and effects of unemployment, poor health outcomes and social isolation experienced disproportionately by people with learning disabilities.

Unemployment: MLMC's activities contribute to greater confidence, increased knowledge and skills which improve employability for its members. Fees are charged for professional services such as Power Up, Travel Buddy Trainers and Inspections - this means people with learning disabilities are given meaningful work opportunities that they are paid for and valued for.

Poor health outcomes: The work with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group has increased the take up of health checks for people with learning disabilities. Across all MLMC services there is a consistent theme of improved physical and mental wellbeing.

MY LIFE MY CHOICE CREATING SOCIAL VALUE



TRAVEL BUDDY TRAINERS

My Life My Choice trained and employed 10 Travel Buddy trainers who supported people with learning disabilities to travel independently, delivering savings of £75,638 to beneficiaries, families and local authorities.



SPEAKING UP

My Life My Choice amplifies the voices of people with a learning disability. Their user-led campaign videos have over 29,000 views.



POWER UP TRAINERS

My Life My Choice recruited, registered and trained 10 Power Up trainers who earned a total of £4,240 - and between them, trained 245 people.



EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE

My Life My Choice recruited, registered, trained and DBS checked 14 'Experts by Experience' who earned a total of £6,765. Between them they undertook 67 inspections and generated £50,000 in fees for the charity with surpluses reinvested back into other projects.



SELF-ADVOCACY GROUPS

My Life My Choice held 120 group sessions, providing much needed social opportunities for people with learning disabilities, and over 3000 hours of respite for support workers and family carers.

Social isolation: By providing a range of opportunities for members, MLMC is reducing the isolation that members might experience and increasing independence. Most notably, members are supported and empowered by one another to engage at a level that works for them.

"For me it's important to get paid so I can afford to do the things I like to do. Getting paid for my hard work makes me feel proud and like I'm achieving things."

Shaun Picken, MLMC Consultant.

The projects and services deliver a benefit and impact for direct participants but also:

Other people with learning disabilities: Who have their profile raised and needs better understood, both by healthcare professionals, public sector agencies and the wider public. This leads to improved practice within services but can also improve attitudes and reduce stigma.

Families, carers and support workers: Who benefit from improved healthcare and services for the people they care for and support; also many of the MLMC services give them much-valued respite.

Public sector and agencies, e.g. police, local authority, healthcare: Who benefit through the voice and involvement of MLMC members which ensures a greater understanding of people with learning disabilities which leads to improved practices and services.

Wider society: Who benefit in that they have their perceptions challenged, and understand that people with learning disabilities want to have their views taken seriously.

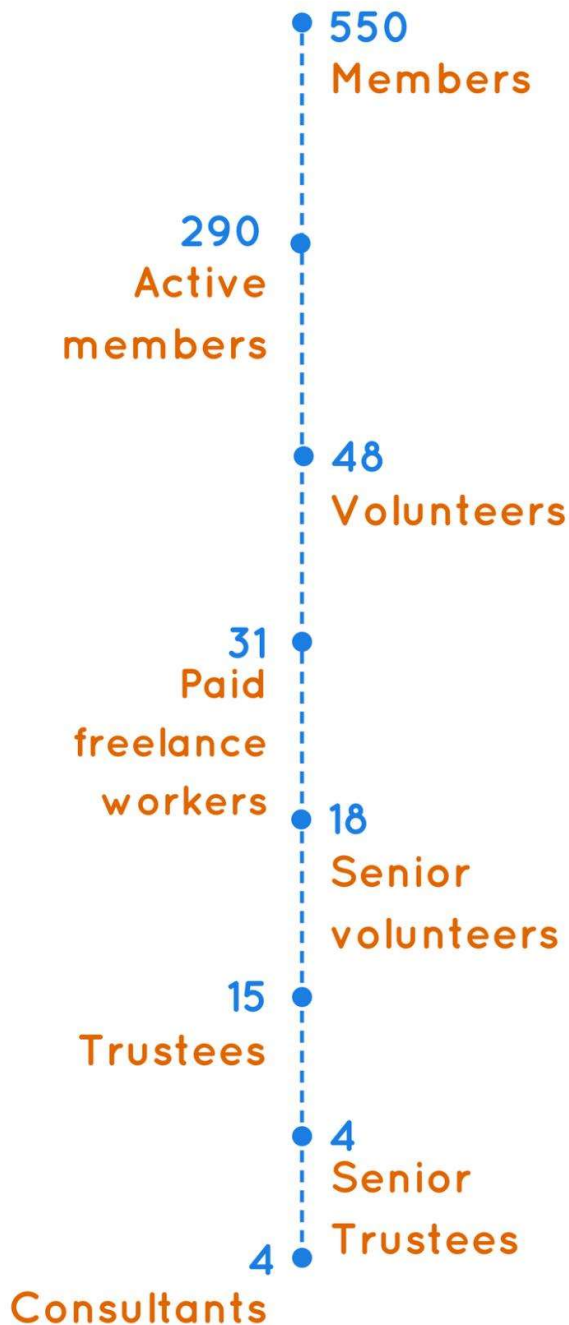
"[Encouraging people with learning disabilities to be more active in their community] can help to improve social attitudes towards learning disability because positive direct contact with people with a learning disability is an effective way of improving attitudes towards them"

Mencap, 2017, citing Chadwick et al. 2014; Milner and Kelly 2009; Scior and Werner 2015.

Appendix 1: The MLMC Member Journey

MY LIFE
MY CHOICE

MEMBERS IN
NUMBERS



The MLMC journey starts with membership of the organisation. Once individuals are engaged many progress, develop and flourish as they become more involved and/or take on greater responsibility. People are not restricted to following the path or 'journey' and occasionally some enter MLMC as volunteers or paid workers in the first instance.

Key

Members – have completed a membership form, receive newsletter and are on MLMC member database

Active members – receive services e.g. nightclub attendee, self-advocacy group member, and travel buddy trainee

Volunteers – at MLMC activities e.g. nightclub, radio show, campaigns, and office admin

Paid freelance worker – as a trainer, travel buddy, consultant and/or inspector

Senior volunteers – leading other volunteers and MLMC activities

Trustee – the big bosses in charge of MLMC

Senior trustees – meeting weekly and taking the big decisions for MLMC's finances, all aspects of HR, and governance

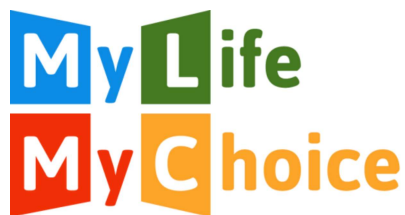
Paid consultants – experienced senior trainers, consultants and/or inspectors representing the charity at the highest level



The Foundation for Social Improvement

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<http://www.thefsi.org>



My Life My Choice

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