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Leading Libraries Summative Evaluation Report

July 2022

Acknowledgments

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are solely those of the authors and participants in the evaluation. The authors are not liable for the accuracy of any information gathered to compile this document. All data collected is to be construed as contributions towards meeting the aims of the study. The authors accept no liability for errors or omissions in this document and accept no responsibility for loss or injury which may occur as a result of reliance placed on any part of its contents. The

evaluation team is only able to consider data presented during the course of engagement.

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Executive Summary

The Leading Libraries programme was supported by Arts Council England through its National Lottery funded Transforming Leadership programme, with additional funding from Libraries Connected and CILIP, Leading Libraries was a 30-month learning and mentoring programme for staff in public library services. The programme ran from September 2020 to March 2022 and was led and managed by Libraries Connected, with the Birmingham Leadership Institute at the University of Birmingham delivering the main component of the programme.

Leading Libraries was launched to develop leadership throughout the workforce and address specific issues around succession planning and diversity within public libraries. The programme aimed to harness the talent within the public library service and was influenced by the need to move beyond traditional outmoded views of leadership. The programme was heavily influenced by the "21st Century Public Servant[1]" and "intent based leadership[2]" models, and reflected the CILIP definition of professionalism within the sector[3].

A total of 60 staff from fifteen library services across England took part and within each service, four staff participated in the programme - representing a Head of Service, an Emerging Leader and two potential future leaders who became known as the 'Powerful Talent'. Delivery was online consisting of a mixture of whole group sessions, whole peer group sessions (network sessions), small peer group sessions (Pods), and service group sessions (Quads). This was supplemented by online resources. Each service was tasked with undertaking a strategic challenge to address an issue of relevance for their service which provided a means of reflecting on, and implementing, learning from the programme.

The programme and online legacy resources based on the programme were developed for use by others beyond the lifespan of the funded programme.

Evaluation of the Programme was undertaken by Evidence Base Research and Evaluation Service at Birmingham City University and was led by Pete Dalton. The evaluation sought to collect data to investigate the following aspects of the programme: delivery; impact on participants; impact on participating services; and wider impact.

The evaluation took a mixed methods approach. Formative activities included post session surveys, session observation and interim interviews. Summative evaluation consisted of focus groups and a survey conducted in November 2021.

Programme Design and Delivery

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[1] https://21stcenturypublicservant.wordpress.com/
[2] https://davidmarquet.com/
[3] https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cilip.org.uk/resource/resmgr/cilip_new_website/professional_registration/professionalism/professional_definition_v2.pdf

Overall, the set-up, design and delivery of the programme has been successful. The Covid-19 pandemic presented a significant challenge and the delivery team worked diligently to adapt the programme to an online mode of delivery and review the approach throughout.

It was hoped that the programme would attract a more diverse range of participants, however, recruitment to the programme was managed by each service and took into consideration a range of local factors. Despite this, there is evidence that participation in the programme has influenced the majority of participants' views on diversity.

The delivery structure provided a way of managing the cohort and enabling interaction within service groups as well as between peers from other services. These mixed formats provided space for networking and exchanging experiences and provided an opportunity to interact with colleagues working at different levels and roles.

The programme content was based around four leadership capabilities:

- Skills for inclusive leadership
- Skills for resilient leadership
- Skills for dialogic leadership
- Skills for innovative leadership

It was well received and overall engagement with the programme was high.

Despite this, many participants reported challenges to getting the most out of the programme. The most common challenges reported were: devoting time to activities amidst competing work priorities; dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic; and dealing with local work circumstances.

Incorporating a strategic challenge project addressing a real-world issue for each service was generally well received and provided a valuable means of using what was learned as the programme progressed. Some participants would have liked clearer guidance on the strategic challenge early on and some felt that it added an additional workload pressure.

Impact on Participants

Generally, participants considered that the programme had been important in contributing to many areas including: broadening perspectives on leadership; developing others; increasing self-awareness; and increasing confidence as a leader.

Comparison of participants' responses to statements between the summative and baseline evaluation surveys shows that participants felt the programme had contributed to their understanding and practice of a range of areas of leadership. There were particularly significant positive increases in ratings for the following

statements: 'I think of myself as a leader'; 'I know what makes a good leader', 'I am confident in my own leadership skills'; 'I possess effective leadership skills'; 'Other people consider me to be a leader'; and 'I have the ability to make a significant impact on my workplace/environment as a leader'.

For most respondents the programme had either changed or reinforced their views of the challenges of being a leader and for many the programme had contributed to changing perceptions around issues of diversity in the library sector workforce.

Over half of the summative survey respondents reported that the programme had had an impact on their career aspirations with a few participants changing roles or getting new jobs during the programme. Some participants reported frustration around limited career progression opportunities within their service or the public library sector as a whole and limited opportunities to use what they had learned on the programme in the future.

Participants enjoyed additional benefits of participating in the programme. These included: developing networks; improved working relationships with colleagues; involvement in projects; increased confidence; more self-awareness and opportunity to reflect.

Across the cohort, the programme contributed to participants development in the four key leadership capabilities: resilience; dialogue; inclusion and innovation. In most areas there was a statistically significant improvement in participants ratings between the baseline and summative surveys.

Impact on Services

Overall, many participants considered that the programme had, or would have an impact on their service. At the time of the summative evaluation survey in November 2021, over half of the survey respondents considered that the programme had already had an impact on their service. Just over one third of participants responding to the summative survey indicated that they did not know if their involvement in the programme had impacted their service at that point with some considering it too early to assess the impact. Local circumstances also affected the extent to which the outcomes of the programme had, or would have, an impact on the service.

Examples of ways that the skills and understanding gained on the programme fed into the wider service included: supporting inclusion and diversity; improving communication and staff development: and strengthening networks and relationships beyond the library service.

The strategic challenge was a key way in which the programme could contribute to having an impact on library services. The strategic challenges addressed a range of topics including: improving diversity in the workforce; understanding and improving

the digital offer; engaging, involving and supporting young people; and maximising the value of the library in the community.

Many participants reported a range of positive outcomes as a result of working on their strategic challenges. This included wider impacts beyond extending to the wider service and the user community.

Case studies (available on the Libraries Connected website) produced in May 2022 focussed on a selection of the participating service's strategic challenges. These provide valuable examples of the impact that this activity is having and include:
- Improving library spaces and resources
- Providing volunteering and apprenticeship opportunities for young people
- Developing new programmes of events to engage communities
- Involving staff and the community in new projects
- Developing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan
- Understanding and improving the digital offer
- Understanding and evaluating events to improve the value and impact of the library service

The case studies highlight examples of the ways in which what participants had learned on the Leading Libraries programme has fed into the delivery of the strategic challenge. This includes:
- Putting theory into practice and providing a focus for activity
- Enabling staff to further develop the leadership capabilities underpinning the programme
- Fostering increased collaboration and cooperation and empowering staff and raising confidence

Wider Impact

The Leading Libraries programme was designed to have a long-term impact through developing a diverse workforce with leadership skills to support the sector to respond to leadership challenges in new ways. There are a range of outputs which already show ways in which the Leading Libraries programme is having a wide impact.

The Leading Libraries programme has produced a successful model of course delivery which could be fed forward into the development of further courses.

An online learning programme has been produced focussing on the four Leading Libraries leadership capabilities and these multimedia resources are being made available to all library staff.

Inspired by the Leading Libraries programme a short version of the programme was delivered. This had a focus on participants of female and BAME backgrounds and reflects the ongoing desire of Libraries Connected and other organisations to support diversity in leadership within the library workforce.

The strategic challenge projects address real world issues that other library services may be faced with. Libraries Connected and CILIP are planning activities to showcase the outcomes of the Leading Libraries Strategic Challenges in order to share approaches and lessons learned more widely within the sector.

The programme has shown how any member of library staff can display leadership regardless of role or position. It has demonstrated how leadership talent can be recognised and enabled wherever it exists in the service.

The programme has contributed to changing perceptions of leadership and inclusion and has already influenced thinking and practice within sector wide organisations such as Libraries Connected and CILIP. It is expected that through the ongoing work of participating individuals and library services these expanded perceptions of leadership will cascade further throughout each service and the sector more widely.

The programme has contributed to developing valuable leadership capabilities in members of the library workforce. This includes increasing understanding of issues around diversity, expanded networks and increased confidence to lead. It is expected that the influence of these individual participants will be felt further within their existing services and throughout the diverse paths that their careers may take.

CILIP's Professional Knowledge and Skills Base (PKSB) and Professional Registration was promoted to participants during the final taught session as a good way to build on the experience of this programme, to encourage ongoing connection to the wider sector, to continue to develop and formally recognise reflective practice, network-build and understand impact within their own organisations.

Next steps

This programme is one element of the Libraries Connected leadership strategy to build a more diverse and representative public library leadership as part of the wider agenda of promoting equality and diversity within the sector and to support succession planning. Based on the experiences and lessons learned from successfully delivering the Leading Libraries programme, there are a range of opportunities for further development to be considered. These include:

- Investigating ways in which to continue the work started by the Leading Libraries programme. This could include seeking further funding to undertake a similar programme to include more library services, possibly in partnership with other parts of the sector.

- Assessing longer term impact. Further evaluation work should be undertaken to follow up participants and discover to what extent the programme has had an impact on individuals and services over the longer term.

- Transferring the proven model of course delivery and group interactions to other environments including hybrid, online and face to face delivery.

- Reviewing the effectiveness and challenges of the recruitment processes for this programme, to ensure that we maximise opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to take part in future programmes and building this into a wider programme of workforce equality and diversity practices including recruitment, support for diverse workforces and leadership.

- Promoting further engagement with the online leadership modules developed through the programme which are hosted on Learning Pool and CILIP's e-learning hub.

- Exploring ways to develop further pathways to leadership at a local, regional and national level.

- Promoting opportunities for further development such as contributing to Information professional and participation in other sector projects, such as the digital leadership for libraries e-learning programme.

- Sharing the lessons learned and successes from the programme. Case studies featuring participating services and the work undertaken to address their strategic challenges should be shared widely. Programme participants should be invited to share their experiences and expertise on specific topics covered by the programme, for example, supporting diversity, assessing digital offers, working with young people and demonstrating leadership in a range of ways within a library service.

- Libraries Connected continuing to promote and instil the values and ethos of leadership embodied in the Leading Libraries programme which emphasises that everyone has the potential to display leadership regardless of level and role.

Libraries Connected, CILIP and partner organisations and library services will consider how to make the most of these opportunities. Valuable work is already underway to build on the legacy of the programme and should be continued in order to maximise the benefit of this innovative and successful programme.

1. Context

The Leading Libraries programme was supported by Arts Council England through its National Lottery funded Transforming Leadership programme, with additional funding from Libraries Connected and CILIP, Leading Libraries was a 30-month learning and mentoring programme for staff in public library services. and was led and managed by Libraries Connected, with the Birmingham Leadership Institute at the University of Birmingham delivering the main component of the programme.

The programme was launched to develop leadership throughout the workforce and address specific issues around succession planning and diversity within public libraries. The programme aimed to harness the talent within the public library service. The programme was influenced by the need to move beyond traditional outmoded views of leadership and drew on the leadership models of "21st Century Public Servant" and "Intent based leadership" and reflected the CILIP definition of professionalism within the sector[4]. "*CILIP believes that what makes someone a professional is the knowledge, skills, attitude, behaviours and values that they bring to their work*".

The programme was led and managed by Libraries Connected, with the Birmingham Leadership Institute at the University of Birmingham delivering the main component of the programme. A total of 60 staff from fifteen library services across England took part and within each service, staff representing a Head of Service, an Emerging Leader and two Powerful Talent participated.

The programme was delivered online and the facilitated aspects consisted of whole group sessions, peer group sessions (Pods), and service group sessions (Quads). This was supplemented by online resources. Each service was tasked with undertaking a strategic challenge to address an issue of relevance for their service and this provided one way of reflecting on, and implementing, learning from the programme. The programme ran from September 2020 to March 2022 and online legacy resources based on the programme were developed for use by others beyond the lifespan of the funded programme.

Evidence Base Research and Evaluation Service at Birmingham City University was commissioned to undertake formative and summative evaluation of the programme. Evidence Base Director Pete Dalton was the project lead. This report presents the findings of the evaluation.

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[4]
https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.cilip.org.uk/resource/resmgr/cilip_new_website/professional_registration/professionalism/professional_definition_v2.pdf

2. Approach

The evaluation sought to collect data to investigate the following topics:

- Programme delivery
- Impact on participants
- Impact on participants' services
- Wider impact

The evaluation has both formative and summative elements and took a mixed methods approach. Formative activities included post session surveys, session observation and interim interviews. Summative evaluation consisted of a comprehensive survey conducted in November 2021 and focus groups.

A full list of evaluation activities including when they were conducted can be found in the Appendix.

This report is largely based on the summative data and, where appropriate, supplemented by data collected throughout the rest of the programme.

In the early stages of the programme two surveys were conducted: a baseline survey and capabilities survey where participants rated themselves in relation to the four capabilities covered by the programme: resilience; dialogue; inclusion; and innovation.

The summative survey combined a repetition of the initial capabilities assessment as well as some of the baseline questions in order to plot changes over the course of the programme.

The survey was developed using Survey Monkey and consisted of a series of self-assessment rating scales against a number of criteria as well as some open-ended questions about the programme more generally. The survey was aimed at all participants in Leading Libraries i.e. Heads of Service, Emerging Leaders and Powerful Talent. Each participant was provided with a unique identification number which meant that the evaluation team could not identify individual participants from their responses. The survey was live from 13th October 2021 until 26th November 2021.

Response Rate

The summative survey received a total of 42 responses out of 60.

	Baseline Survey (Closing date – 8/10/22)	Capabilities Survey (Closing date – 25/01/21)	Summative Survey (Closing date – 9/11/21)
Emerging Leader	14	15	13
Head of Service	14	15	9
Powerful Talent	29	28	20

Grand Total	57	58	42

Table 1: Response Rate

This were fewer responses to the summative survey than there were to the baseline survey and the initial capabilities survey. The precise reasons for the lower response rate are not clear and are likely to be a combination of: participants moving roles or leaving the service during the course of the programme, and an element of drop off towards the end of the programme. We know that four had left the participating library service, one went on maternity leave and one withdrew from the programme.

Analysis and Presentation

The summative evaluation survey consisted of qualitative and quantitative questions. 42 responses were included in the descriptive analysis. Where elements were compared with previous surveys, it was only possible to include respondents who had completed both surveys as the responses were analysed using matched pairs t-tests[5]. This meant that for comparison with the baseline survey 38 responses were included in the statistical analysis and when comparing with the initial capabilities survey 39 responses were included in the statistical analysis.

For the purposes of presentation in the report, quantitative data relating to the three categories of respondent (Heads of Service, Emerging Leaders and Powerful Talent) is presented as a combined total. This is due to the relatively small sample size (for each respondent group) and because statistical testing using chi-square[6] tests showed that there were only a few instances where there were any significant difference in responses between respondent groups. Any significant differences are noted in the report text.

For additional information the responses by individual respondent type are shown in a supplementary table after the aggregated totals. Quotations are attributed to type of respondents in brackets throughout:

Additional Considerations

- It was not possible to track all the people who left their role or services during the course of the programme and discover their reasons for leaving and what they had gained from the programme up to that point. There are, however, a few examples where people stated that the programme had been a factor in making a career move during the course of the programme.

- While the strategic challenge projects are being reviewed separately, the evaluation has sought to draw on lessons learned from the strategic challenge activities.

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[5] A matched pairs t-test is used to compare the means of two samples when each observation in one sample can be paired with an observation in the other sample.
[6] A chi-square test is used to determine whether or not there is a significant association between two categorical variables.

- It is expected that that the programme will have an impact over a longer period than is covered by this evaluation report. As a result, some follow up evaluation activity has been planned to report in March 2023 which will provide an assessment of the impact of the Leading Libraries programme over a longer period.

3. Evaluation of Programme Set Up, Design and Delivery

At the core of the Leading Libraries programme were the taught sessions designed and led by the Leadership Institute at the University of Birmingham. The evaluation investigated various aspects of programme delivery including:

- Recruitment
- Delivery
- Content
- Engagement.

3.1. Recruitment

One of the aims of the programme was to attract a diverse leadership talent pool, specifically people from Black Asian and minority ethnic heritage and women as part of a wider agenda of promoting equality and diversity within the sector. Libraries Connected issued an invitation to Heads of Service to participate in the programme and provided details of the aims of the programme. Based on the information provided, interested Heads of Services went about assessing interest from potential Emerging Leaders and Powerful Talent within their service and recruiting staff to the programme.

Whilst detailed information about how staff were recruited in each service is not available, interim focus group sessions with a number of staff highlighted different ways in which Heads of Service had recruited Emerging Leaders and Powerful Talents to participate. These included:

- Encouraging particular staff members to apply
- Staff being recommended by managers or colleagues
- Staff being selected to participate by managers
- An open application for anyone to respond to
- A mixture of the above

In just a few cases, some tensions around the recruitment process were reported.

> *Within the quad a tension emerged as it became clear that is some areas the powerful talent had more effective skills than the future leader.* (Head of Service)

> *Other staff have been a little angry they were not chosen for the programme which has been a little difficult to understand.* (Powerful Talent)

In the initial baseline survey, respondents were asked to indicate their demographic details. Out of a total of 56 responses, the following gender and ethnicity were indicated.
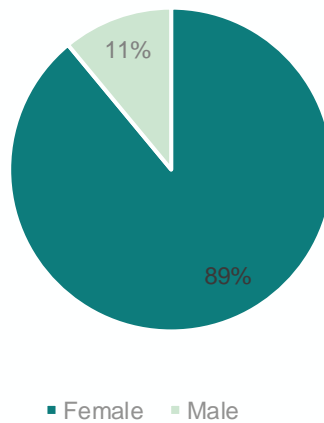
Female *Male*

Figure 1. Gender of Participants at the start of the Programme

Figure 1 shows the gender of participants at the start of the programme[7]. The majority of participants (89%) were female. This was a positive outcome for the aims of the programme recognising that even in female dominated professions, women often face barriers to leadership.
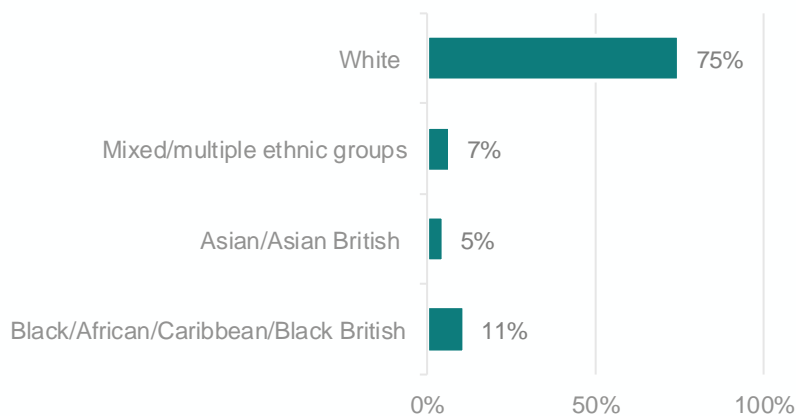
Figure 2 Ethnicity of Participants at the start of the Programme

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[7] *Gender and ethnicity data was obtained from respondents to the baseline survey so was based on participants involved in the programme at that point. A few participants dropped out of the programme and were replaced by others.*

Figure 2 shows the ethnicity of participants at the start of the programme. The majority of participants (75%) were white.

It was hoped that participants would have comprised a greater proportion of staff from ethnic minority communities within the workforce. The composition of participants may reflect local factors influencing who was recruited to the programme as well as an overall lack of diversity in the overall public library staff pool. A few survey respondents commented on diversity in the cohort:

> *I also would have thought this could have benefited other regions in terms of ethnicity diversity which was lacking outside of London to be honest.* (Emerging Leader)

> *More diversity in participants.* (Head of Service)

Despite this, there is evidence that participation in the programme has influenced the majority of participants' views on diversity (See Section 4.2.2).

3.2. Programme Delivery, Design and Content

Figure 3 presents survey respondents' ratings for aspects of programme delivery, design and content. These topics are explored further in the following sections.
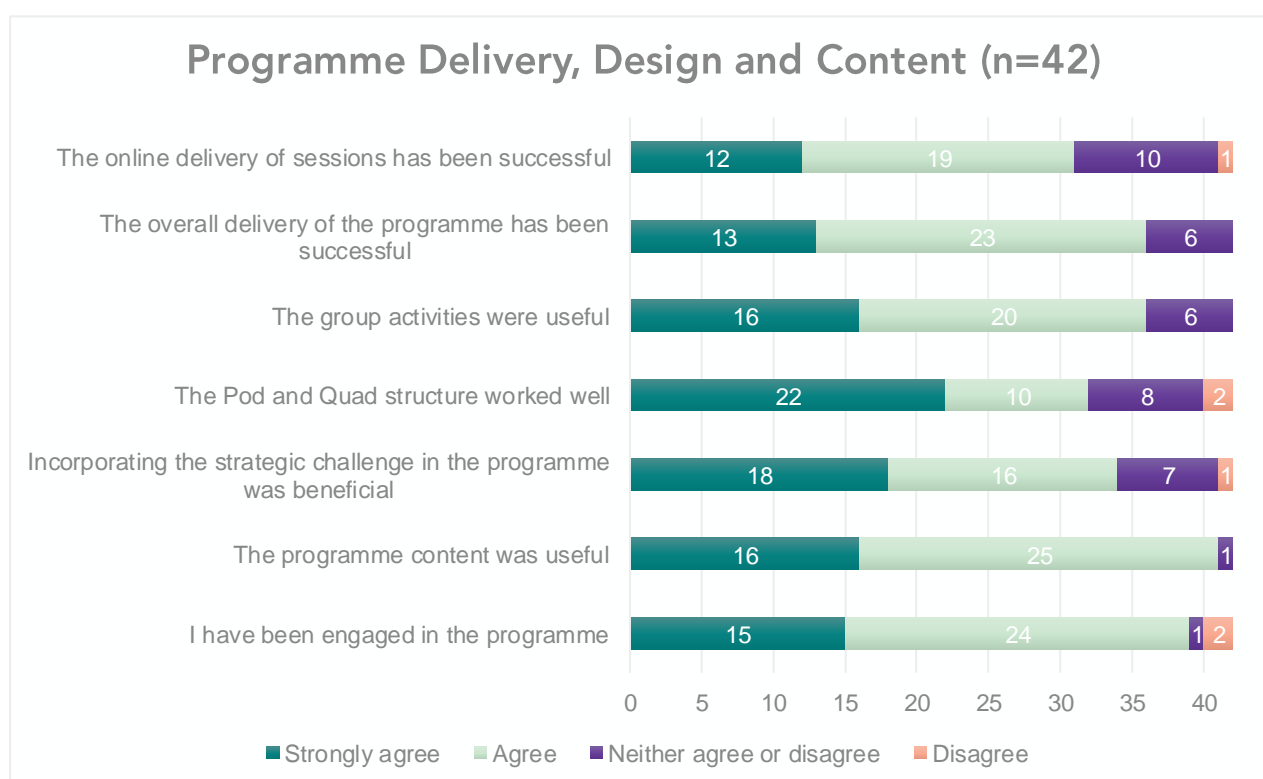
Figure 3: Programme Delivery and Design

3.2.1. Programme Delivery

More than four-fifths of respondents to the summative evaluation survey believed that the overall delivery of the programme had been successful.
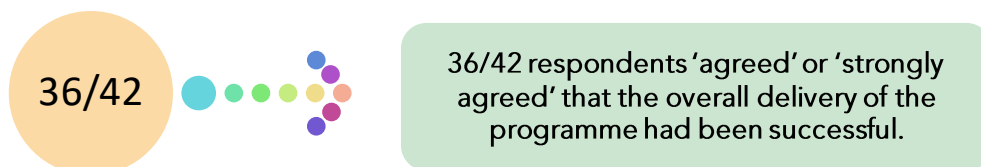
36/42   36/42 respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the overall delivery of the programme had been successful.

The overall delivery of the programme has been successful	1 - Strongly agree	2 - Agree	3 - Neither agree or disagree	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	3	6	4	13
Head of Service	2	6	1	9
Powerful Talent	8	11	1	20
Grand Total	13	23	6	42

Table 2: Successful Delivery of the Programme

Comments about the successful delivery of the programme included:

Such an important course and so needed. (Head of Service)

The programme was brilliant and I really enjoyed it. (Powerful Talent)

More detailed aspects of the programme delivery are explored below.

Moving to online delivery

The programme was originally intended to be delivered face to face and was designed with this in mind. A key factor affecting the programme design and delivery was the emergence of Covid-19.

31/42   31/42 respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the online delivery of sessions had been successful.
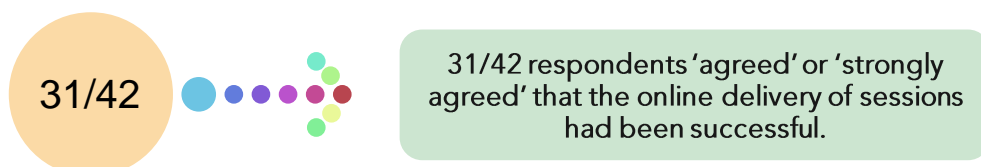
The online delivery of sessions has been successful	1 - Strongly agree	2 - Agree	3 - Neither agree or disagree	4 - Disagree	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	4	4	4	1	13
Head of Service	1	5	3	0	9
Powerful Talent	7	10	3	0	20

Grand Total	12	19	10	1	42

Table 3: Success of Online Delivery Sessions

Around three-quarters of participants agreed that the online delivery of sessions had been successful. Covid-19 restrictions and the associated uncertainty meant that difficult decisions were required about whether to delay the programme or to progress in an online format and possibly revert to face to face if the situation improved. A decision was made to continue the programme in an online format. This presented a number of challenges.

The Birmingham Leadership Institute team were required to adapt the programme to an online environment at relatively short notice and the team learned lessons along the way:

> *It provided challenges to our own practice, we were learning how to do it as we were going along….If we'd known it was going to be an online programme, what we would have delivered it in a much more bite-sized way, because that's the best way to do it.* (Delivery Team Member)

Both the delivery team and participants faced a learning curve with moving the programme to online delivery. This included getting familiar with particular software and being comfortable with interacting online:

> *Working only online and using skills being explored from home very difficult.* (Emerging Leader)

> *Initially IT was a big issue.* (Emerging Leader)

Both delivery team members and participants described the challenges of interaction online:

> *Little possibility to actually intervene and chat to people.* (Delivery Team Member)

> *I definitely began to suffer Teams/Zoom fatigue on the all-day sessions if I'm honest but understand it had to be done that way.* (Powerful Talent)

> *Covid did not help as the digital is not quite as effective as face to face.* (Head of Service)

Responses from the regular post-event feedback surveys suggested that over time participants became more comfortable with online delivery and technical issues were less prevalent. Online delivery also meant that there were opportunities to interact which did not involve travel. Despite this, there was still a general view that face to face or even a mixture of face to face and online delivery would have been preferred.

> *I think the programme would be more engaging in person.* (Emerging Leader)

A mixed online and F2F would have worked better I think but obviously that simply wasn't an option. (Emerging Leader)

With hindsight, the decisions made were pragmatic and sensible and meant that the programme was delivered. The flexibility of the delivery team and participants meant that it was still possible to deliver a high-quality programme under challenging circumstances.

And I think their decision to keep going because it was going to be supportive of people getting through 2020 I think it was exactly the right decision, but it took quite a lot of nerves. (Delivery Team Member)

Duration, timing and expectations

The Leading Libraries programme ran from May 2020 to March 2022. The main involvement of The Leadership Institute ended in July 2021. For a few participants this caused confusion as they believed that this point marked the end of the programme.

Apologies but I must have missed the moment when we were told that the programme finishes this year. I was expecting it to be 30 months long. Libraries Connected website and all information I've seen, mentioned 30 months. Also, the other members of my quad were surprised by the fact that we're finishing soon. I've been enjoying the programme. I think if we had 30 months available, we'd be able to explore our projects more, especially that everything was more or less "on hold" because of the pandemic. (Powerful Talent)

A few participants commented how they would have liked more about what was expected of them and the outcomes and structure of the programme:

Clearer instruction. (Emerging Leader)

Lay out the structure from the start and expectations. (Emerging Leader)

This is difficult to explain but a more coherent links between sessions and themes - sometimes felt a bit disjointed and not clear on what the outcomes were for certain activities within the programme as a whole. (Emerging Leader)

3.2.2. Group Activities

The programme was designed to be interactive and encourage group reflection and dialogue using online break out rooms. Group activities could take the following forms:

Full Cohort Meetings — Comprised of all programme participants

Network Meetings — Comprised of all participants from a single group e.g. all Heads of Service

Quads — Comprised of all participants from a single service

Pods — Comprised of a group of three participants representing the same participant type from different services (these were initially determined by geographical proximity when the assumption was that the programme would be delivered in person)

36/42

36/42 respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the group activities were useful.
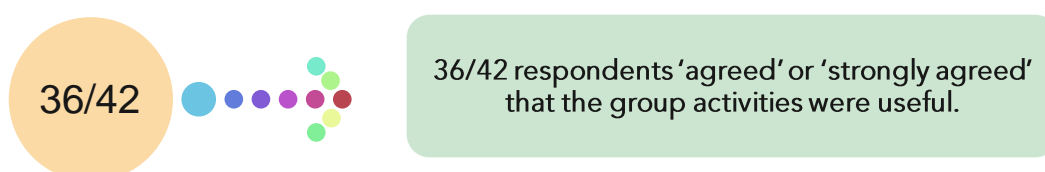
The group activities were useful	1 - Strongly agree	2 - Agree	3 - Neither agree or disagree	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	5	5	3	13
Head of Service	2	6	1	9
Powerful Talent	9	9	2	20
Grand Total	16	20	6	42

Table 4: Usefulness of Group Activities

More than four-fifths of participants were positive about the group activities:

> *The networking and working together sessions with other Quads / Pods was fun learning.* (Emerging Leader)

3.2.3. Pod and Quad Structure

Some of the interactive elements of the programme were designed around Pods where participants were grouped with peers from other services (e.g. a number of emerging leaders were grouped together) and Quads where participants from a single service met as a group. This was intended to provide an opportunity for participants to work within their service groups as well as with those from other services.

32/42 respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the Pod and Quad structure worked well.

The Pod and Quad structure worked well	1 - Strongly agree	2 - Agree	3 - Neither agree or disagree	4 - Disagree	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	6	1	4	2	13
Head of Service	4	4	1	0	9
Powerful Talent	12	5	3	0	20
Grand Total	22	10	8	2	42

Table 5: Pod and Quad Structure

Three-quarters of participants provided positive feedback on the use of Pods and Quads:

I gained a better working relationship with my Quad and enjoyed networking with the Pod. (Powerful Talent)

I especially loved our quad sessions but overall very beneficial to work with colleagues all over the country. (Powerful Talent)

I got a lot out of working with my colleagues in the Quads and also enjoyed the stimulus of working with other services in the Pods. (Powerful Talent)

Some participants referred to how the Quad structure and strategic challenge had encouraged working with staff they may not normally work with:

The experience of working with junior members of my team was enlightening and enjoyable. (Head of Service)

I valued the opportunity to connect on a regular basis with my colleagues, as under normal situation I would only have limited contact with my Head of Service and Emerging Leader. It also brought me in to project work with a colleague I had not worked closely with prior to this and we formed a dynamic synergistic partnership. (Powerful Talent)

Given me the confidence to work more with senior managers in other departments. (Powerful Talent)

For a few participants, getting familiar with the terminology around Pods and Quads was a challenge.

> I felt there was often confusion with some of the language used and terms regarding the Pod and Quad, which I didn't grasp until near the end.
> (Powerful Talent)

> Terminology around pods/quads/cohorts. Some of the terminology used by the tutors was very academia based. (Emerging Leader)

One respondent felt the Quad and Pod structure constrained wider networking within the cohort:

> I would have liked to have engaged more with outside our quads and pods. Felt a shame to be put only with services in our regions when we were online and had the opportunity to network beyond. (Emerging Leader)

3.2.4. The Strategic Challenge

The programme was designed to incorporate a real-world project or 'strategic challenge' for the participants in each service to focus on. The projects covered a range of topics and addressed issues which the service identified as being important.

34/42

34/42 respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that incorporating the strategic challenge in the programme was beneficial.
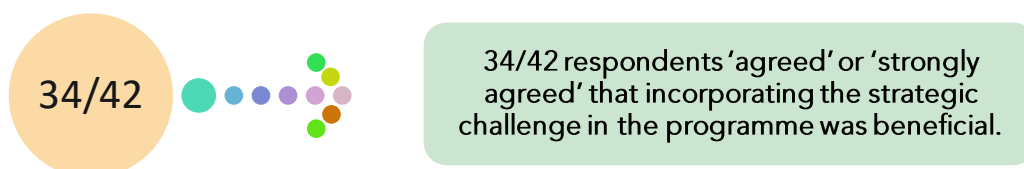
Incorporating the strategic challenge in the programme was beneficial	1 - Strongly agree	2 - Agree	3 - Neither agree or disagree	4 - Disagree	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	6	3	3	1	13
Head of Service	3	4	2	0	9
Powerful Talent	9	9	2	0	20
Grand Total	18	16	7	1	42

Table 6: Benefit of Incorporating the Strategic Challenge in the Programme

Four-fifths of participants agreed that incorporating the strategic challenge in the programme was beneficial.

Positive summative comments on the strategic challenge focused on the benefits from being able to put learning from the programme into practice:

> The library in the strategic challenge has benefitted greatly from this.
> The strategic challenge has kept me and my colleagues engaged beyond the programme and has given us the opportunity to apply our learning.
> (Emerging Leader)

Some, however, felt that the strategic challenge presented an added pressure and there was a lack of adequate support for this activity:

> *I feel the strategic challenge confused people a bit and added pressure to deliver a project amongst already existing busy project workload.*
> *The strategic challenge would have been far more useful if we had had the time to dedicate to it during the programme. (Emerging Leader)*

> *I feel with the strategic challenge we were left to our own devices and think we would've appreciated some formal input/involvement from course leaders. (Emerging Leader)*

> *The project selected was not relevant to my job role and has caused resentment amongst staff who see the quad involvement as a takeover of their own roles and responsibilities. (Emerging Leader)*

It should be noted that varying local circumstances could have an impact on the delivery of each strategic challenge and that this was outside of the control of the Leading Libraries programme. In the context of the Leading Libraries programme, the strategic challenge provided an opportunity for participants to put their learning into practice, as well as provide a focus for reflection and a dialog within the programme groups.

3.2.5. Content and Materials

The programme content focussed on four capabilities relevant to leadership and included presentations, tasking, discussion, group work and reflection and access to supporting resources.

41/42

41/42 respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that the programme content was useful.
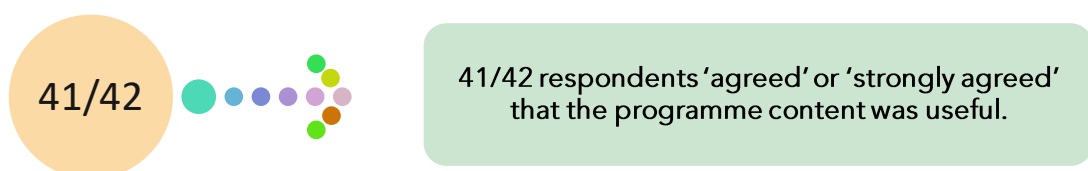
The programme content was useful	1 - Strongly agree	2 - Agree	3 - Neither agree or disagree	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	5	7	1	13
Head of Service	3	6	0	9
Powerful Talent	8	12	0	20
Grand Total	16	25	1	42

Table 7: Programme Content

All participants but one agreed that the programme content was useful.

> *The sessions were well thought through. (Emerging Leader)*

The content and delivery was very well presented and worthwhile. (Powerful Talent)

Whilst overall feedback on the content was positive, there were some lessons learned. With a mixed group of staff working in different roles and with varied backgrounds, it was a challenge to pitch the material at an appropriate level: A member of the delivery team reflected:

Now I think some of the materials were pitched a bit high for the bell curve of the participants. And sometimes I'm prone to using technical terms, which you have to use because it is the right technical term. At times things may have fallen between two stools, because some of the heads had heard things before and they wanted to hear new things and for some people it was completely new. (Delivery Team Member)

Some other suggestions to improve the content included:

- More case studies
- Providing materials in advance of webinars
- A higher proportion of 'taught content' compared to Quad activities
- Greater exploration of leadership in practical contexts
- Integrating mentoring/coaching throughout the programme
- Greater emphasis on networking and career development
- Condensing some content into half-day sessions

3.2.6. Engagement

Overall, respondents to the summative evaluation survey reported a high level of engagement with the programme.

39/42 respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly with the statement 'I have been engaged in the programme'.
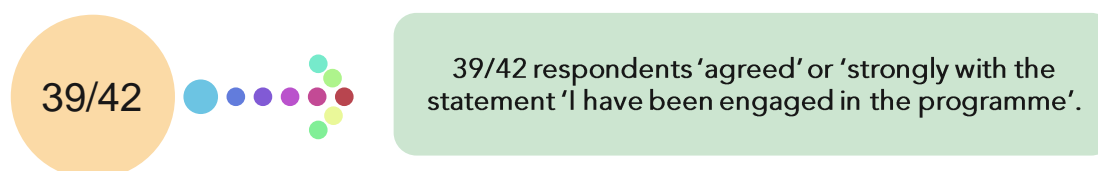
I have been engaged in the programme	1 - Strongly agree	2 - Agree	3 - Neither agree or disagree	4 - Disagree	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	5	6	1	1	13
Head of Service	2	6	0	1	9
Powerful Talent	8	12	0	0	20
Grand Total	15	24	1	2	42

Table 8: Engagement in the Programme

More than nine-tenths of participants agreed that they had been engaged in the programme.

Statistics for attendance at online programme sessions were recorded by the Leadership Institute. These included POD meetings, Network Meetings and Cohort Co-labs and showed a high level of attendance. Out of 33 meetings throughout the whole programme 35 absentees were reported.

A few participants reported challenges to engagement. For some, these were due to personal circumstances, but in a few cases, participants felt that this was due to aspects of the programme:

> *My struggles to engage with the programme are not a reflection on the quality of the course, it's a reflection on my capacity at this time.* (Head Of Service)

> *I was not as engaged as I would have liked to have been due to the challenges we faced in our service at the time.* (Powerful Talent)

> *There were times when I didn't feel entirely engaged and sometimes felt elements didn't always link together to make that coherent whole.* (Emerging Leader)

Some of these issues are explored further in Section 3.2.7.

3.2.7. Challenges to Getting the Most out of the Programme

34/42

34/42 respondents had experienced challenges to getting the most out of the programme.
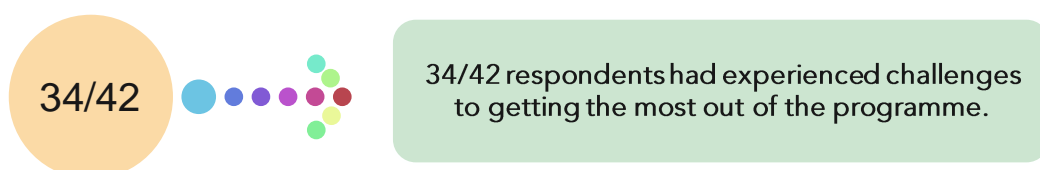
Have you experienced any challenges to you getting the most out of the programme?	No	Yes	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	0	13	13
Head of Service	2	7	9
Powerful Talent	6	14	20
Grand Total	8	34	42

Table 9: Challenges Experienced getting the most out of the Programme

Despite the high level of engagement reported, four-fifths of survey respondents reported facing challenges. Two of the biggest challenges encountered by respondents were participating in the programme during the pandemic and lack of time.

Unsurprisingly, the Covid-19 pandemic put pressure on participants. This affected the opportunities to engage and to implement strategic challenges and put what they have learned into practice as much as they would have hoped.

> *The unique situation added further pressures and need to deal with new and often urgent issues which I had to deal with so further limiting my ability to put time aside.* (Emerging Leader)

> *Covid-19 radically changed the way we did the programme and it was harder to make the time to get together with my team and work on the project.* (Head of Service)

> *During lockdown it was a struggle to balance home life and a toddler, with working online.* (Powerful Talent)

> *Furlough of my workforce meant that I was stretched and not able to give the course my undivided attention.* (Head of Service)

Several participants reported challenges around time and the difficulties of prioritising the programme over day-to-day tasks.

> *Time - everyday work matters seem to take over and the programme was constantly pushed back or neglected.* (Emerging Leader)

> *Time - found it very difficult to put in the time and focus I would have liked to. Very difficult for the whole team to meet up together.* (Emerging Leader)

A few participants expressed frustrations with a lack of opportunity to implement what they had learned into practice:

> *I would like other opportunities but that is difficult in our service.* (Powerful Talent)

> *There has been little opportunity recently.* (Powerful Talent)

Other challenges reported included:

- Service restructure impacting on staff capacity
- Hierarchical structures that restricted the ability of more junior staff to have a say in decisions.
- Staffing changes within the service

3.2.8. Summary

- The overall set up, design and delivery of the Leading Libraries programme has been successful.

- Methods of recruitment participants to the programme varied and was a local decision for each library service. It was hoped to recruit a more diverse group in terms of ethnicity. Despite this, there is evidence that participation in the programme has influenced the majority of participants' views on diversity

- The programme was delivered during the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and the delivery team worked diligently in order to adapt the programme to an online mode of delivery. The team were flexible to reflect on feedback on an ongoing basis and adapt as the programme continued.

- The decision to move to online delivery was sensible and pragmatic amidst an ongoing backdrop of uncertainty. Whilst most participants would have preferred an element of face to face delivery, the reasons for the changes were understood and appreciated. After some initial challenges with the move to an online environment most participants considered that the delivery of the programme had been successful.

- The programme content based around four leadership capabilities was generally well received.

- The delivery structure provided a way of managing the cohort and enabling interaction within service groups (Quads) as well as between selected peer groups from other services (Pods). This was supplemented by network meetings consisting of all members of a particular type of participant. The format provided space for interacting within the service groups and it was noted that for some participants this was a rare opportunity to interact with colleagues working at different levels and roles. Generally, the Pod and Quad structure was valued by most participants.

- Incorporating a strategic challenge project for each service into the programme design was generally well received and provided a way of using and reflection on what was learned as the programme progressed as well as work to address a real issue that could impact the wider library service. Some participants would have liked clearer guidance on the strategic challenge early on and some felt that it added an additional workload pressure.

- Overall, participants' level of engagement with the programme was high.

- Despite this, many participants reported challenges to getting the most out of the programme. Most commonly these were being able to devote enough time to programme activities amidst competing work priorities and dealing with the substantive effects of the Covid-19 pandemic during the programme. Other challenges generally related to local circumstances for particular staff members and services.

- challenges generally related to local circumstances for particular staff members and services.

4. Impact on Participants

This section examines the impact on individual participants in the Leading Libraries programme as reported through the summative evaluation activities.

4.1. Importance of the Programme in Contributing to Development in Particular Areas

The summative survey asked 'on a scale of 1 - 5 where 1 is very important and 5 is not at all important, how important has the programme been in contributing to your development in these following areas?' against a range of statements. The results are shown in Figure 4.

Importance of the Programme in Contributing to Development in Particular Areas (n=42)

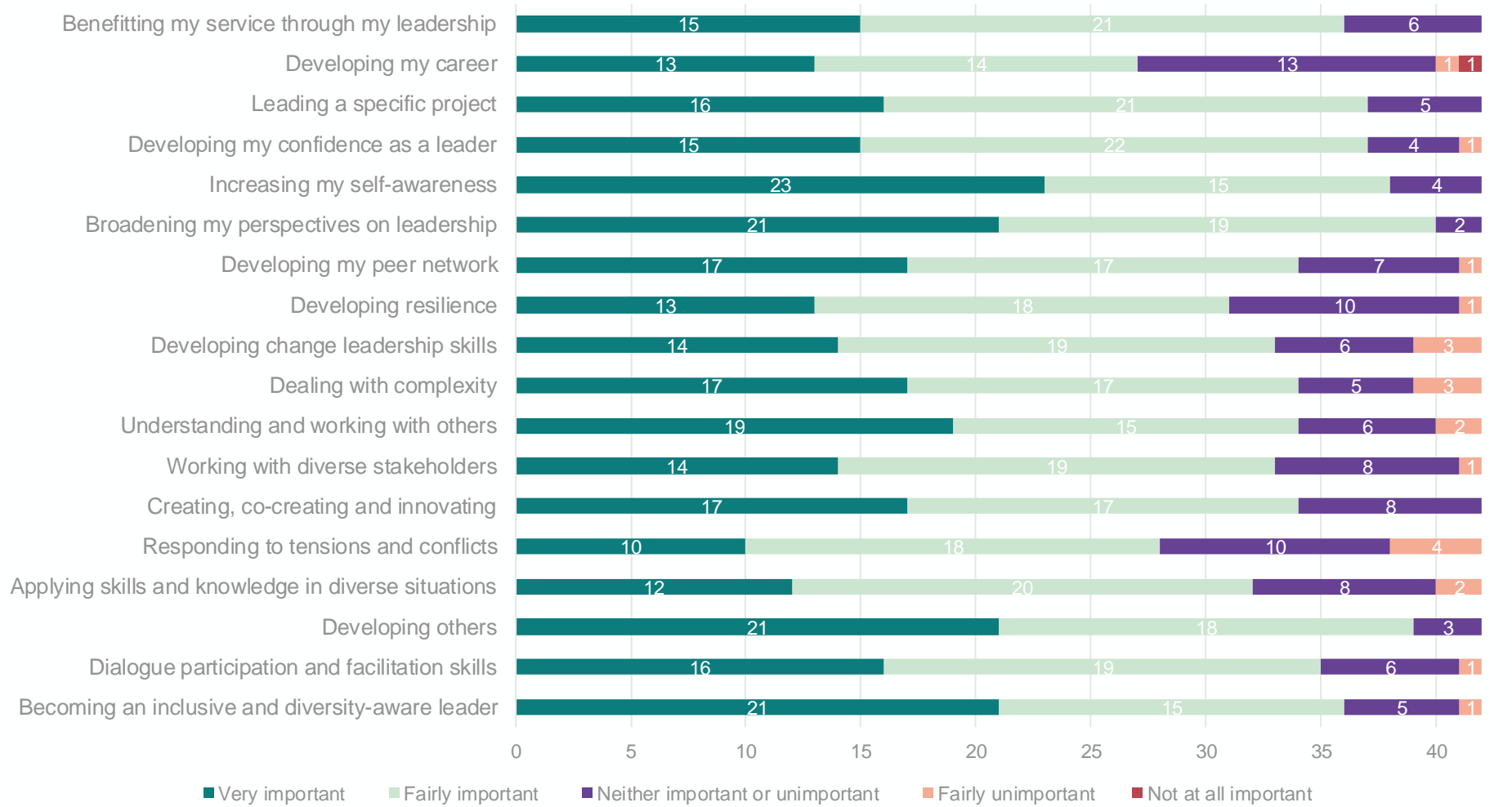| Area	Very important	Fairly important	Neither important or unimportant	Fairly unimportant	Not at all important
Benefitting my service through my leadership	15	21	6		
Developing my career	13	14	13	1	1
Leading a specific project	16	21	5		
Developing my confidence as a leader	15	22	4	1	
Increasing my self-awareness	23	15	4		
Broadening my perspectives on leadership	21	19	2		
Developing my peer network	17	17	7	1	
Developing resilience	13	18	10	1	
Developing change leadership skills	14	19	6	3	
Dealing with complexity	17	17	5	3	
Understanding and working with others	19	15	6	2	
Working with diverse stakeholders	14	19	8	1	
Creating, co-creating and innovating	17	17	8		
Responding to tensions and conflicts	10	18	10	4	
Applying skills and knowledge in diverse situations	12	20	8	2	
Developing others	21	18	3		
Dialogue participation and facilitation skills	16	19	6	1	
Becoming an inclusive and diversity-aware leader	21	15	5	1	

Figure 4: Importance of the Programme in Contributing to Development in Particular Areas

The programme was viewed as important in contributing to many areas of leadership and personal development. The following areas were most highly rated as important or very important

- Broadening my perspective on leadership (40/42)
- Developing others (39/42)
- Increasing my self-awareness (38/42)
- Increasing my confidence as a leader (37/42)

The area with the least important was 'developing my career' however this was still rated as 'important' or 'very important' by nearly two-thirds of respondents (27/42). Some Heads of Service reported that they were not intending to develop their career further due to the stage they had already reached (see Section 4.2.3 Impact on participants' career aspirations).

4.2. Changes in Perceptions and Understanding

The summative survey asked respondents to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements. These reflected similar statements asked in the baseline survey in order to provide an element of comparison with the summative data. The findings are shown in Figure 5.

Where there was a statistically significant difference in scores between the baseline and summative scores, this is indicated by an asterisk.
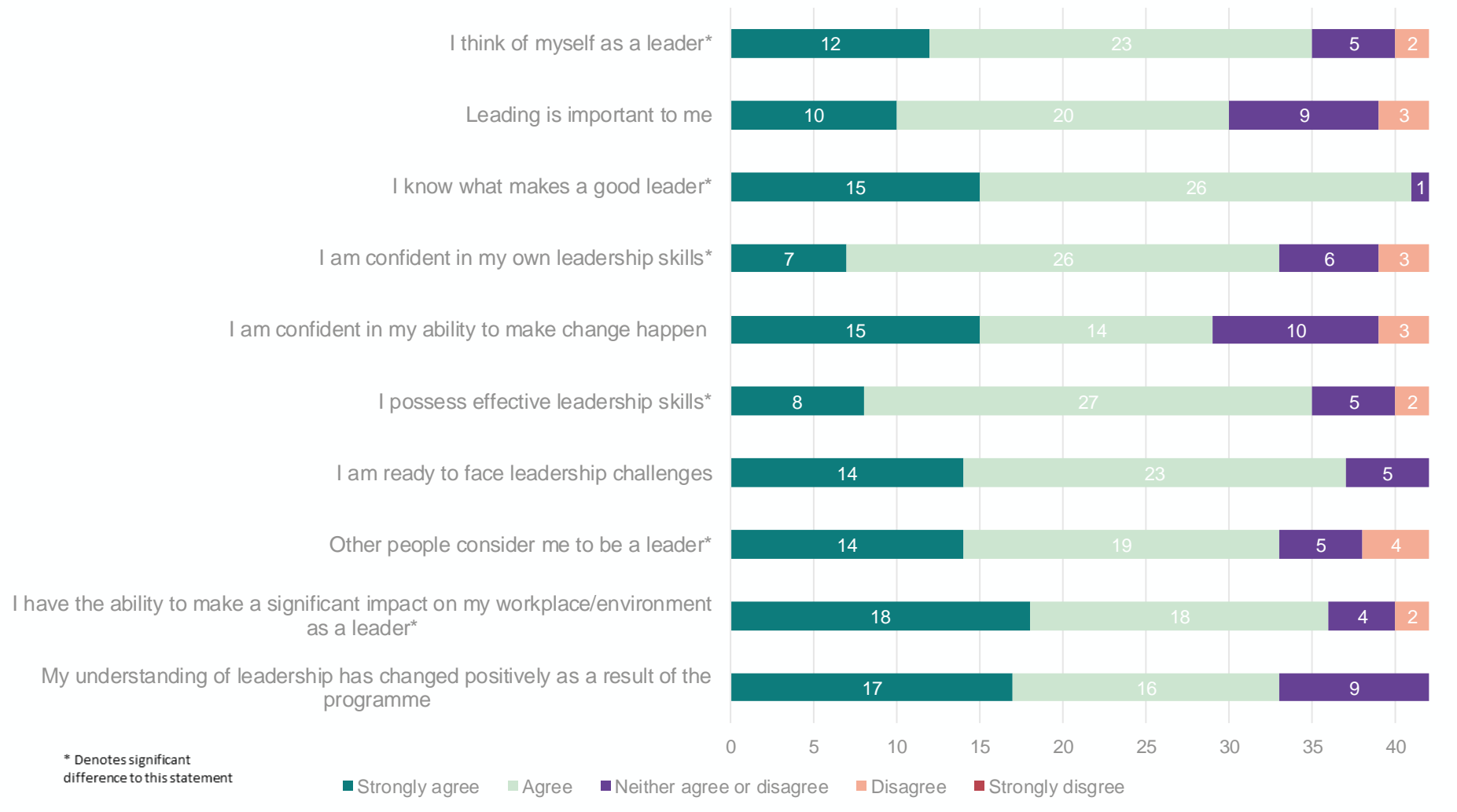
Figure 5: Changes in Perceptions and Understanding

As Figure 5 shows, there was a high level of agreement ('strongly agree' and 'agree') with participants' perceptions of the various aspects of leadership that the project aimed to address, in particular:

- I know what makes a good leader (41/42)
- I think of myself as a leader (35/42)
- I possess effective leadership skills (35/42)
- I am ready to face leadership challenges (37/42)
- I have the ability to make a significant impact on my workplace/environment as a leader (36/42)

The level of agreement was slightly lower for:

- I am confident in my ability to make change happen (29/42)
- Leading is important to me (30/42)
- I am confident in my ability to make change happen (29/42)

When a statistical comparison was carried out on all the statements in Figure 5, there was a statistically significant difference between responses to the baseline and final survey for the following six statements:

- I think of myself as a leader
- I know what makes a good leader
- I am confident in my own leadership skills
- I possess effective leadership skills
- Other people consider me to be a leader
- I have the ability to make a significant impact on my workplace/environment as a leader

The analysis suggests that these statements showing a significant difference are the areas where the project had the greatest impact on participants.

4.2.1. Changing Perceptions of the Challenges of Being a Leader

More than half of participants indicated that the programme had changed their views on the challenge of being a leader.

24/32

24/32 respondents felt the programme had changed their views on the challenge of being a leader.
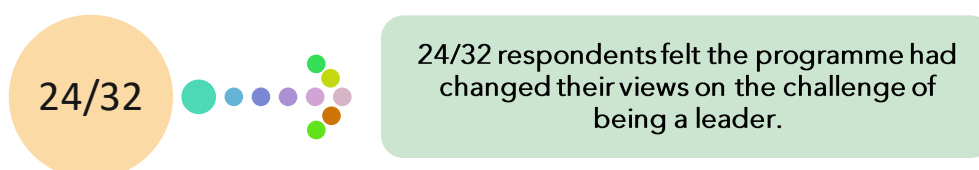
Has the programme changed your views on the challenge of being a leader?	No	Yes	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	2	8	10
Head of Service	3	4	7
Powerful Talent	3	12	15
Grand Total	8	24	32

Table 10: Changing Perceptions of the Challenges of being a Leader

Several participants provided additional information about the insights they had gained about leadership. These included comments about the different ways in which it was possible to be a leader:

> *It has shown me that I can still be a leader even though I'm not a manager.* (Powerful Talent)

> *I think seeing myself as a leader does not come naturally to me but this programme has taught me that there are so many ways of being a leader.* (Powerful Talent)

Others felt they had gained a better understanding of leadership:

> *I feel the programme has changed my views on the challenge of being a leader and I would also say the responsibility that comes with leadership.* (Powerful Talent)

> *Yes, it had made me realise that not all leadership comes with pressure and knowledge, and that there is a continuous journey for everyone at every level.* (Powerful Talent)

> *Showed the importance of resilience for a leader.* (Emerging Leader)

Other participants reflected on what they had learnt in relation to their own role and career development:

> *I gained a better understanding what leadership is and what I can bring to the service and my team.* (Powerful Talent)

> *In a way, I realise that one is probably never really ready for the role of leader and you are allowed to develop once you are in that position. Whether it is one that I want is a different story.* (Emerging Leader)

> *Yes, I thought that I already demonstrated the skills of an inclusive leader but realised that there are still ways in which I can improve that skill.* (Emerging Leader)

Yes. It made me evaluate my management style and think more consciously about myself as a leader. (Powerful Talent)

Some Heads of Service reflected on leadership in terms of their relationship to other staff:

The need to focus on developing confidence within my team around their abilities and progression. (Head Of Service)

A few participants felt the programme had not changed their views on the challenge of being a leader yet they reported experiencing a positive impact on knowledge, skills and awareness.

No - although it developed my knowledge I feel that my understanding of these challenges predates the programme. (Emerging Leader)

Not really changed but I have become more aware. (Powerful Talent)

No, but it has made me think more about how I can nurture leadership. (Head of Service)

Not changed my views exactly but has widened my appreciation of what challenges are experienced at different levels of leadership. (Powerful Talent)

4.2.2. Changes in Perceptions Around Diversity

Just under three-quarters of participants reported that the programme had affected their understanding, attitude or practice in relation to diversity.

29/40 respondents felt the programme affected their understanding / attitude / practice in relation to diversity.
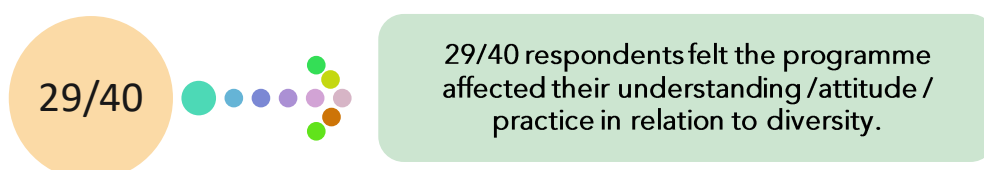
Has the programme affected your understanding/attitude/practice in relation to diversity?	No	Yes	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	5	8	13
Head of Service	3	6	9
Powerful Talent	3	15	18
Grand Total	11	29	40

Table 11: Changes in Perceptions around Diversity

In addition, nearly all respondents (41/42) reported more understanding of the challenges of achieving diversity in the library sector. There were a range of responses to the statement *'the library sector is diverse'* with less than one-quarter (10/42) agreeing or strongly agreeing with that statement.

Perceptions and Changes on Diversity (n=42)

I understand the challenges of achieving diversity in the library sector
- Strongly agree: 25
- Agree: 16
- Neither agree or disagree: 1

The library sector is diverse
- Strongly agree: 2
- Agree: 8
- Neither agree or disagree: 13
- Disagree: 13
- Strongly disgree: 6

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree or disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disgree
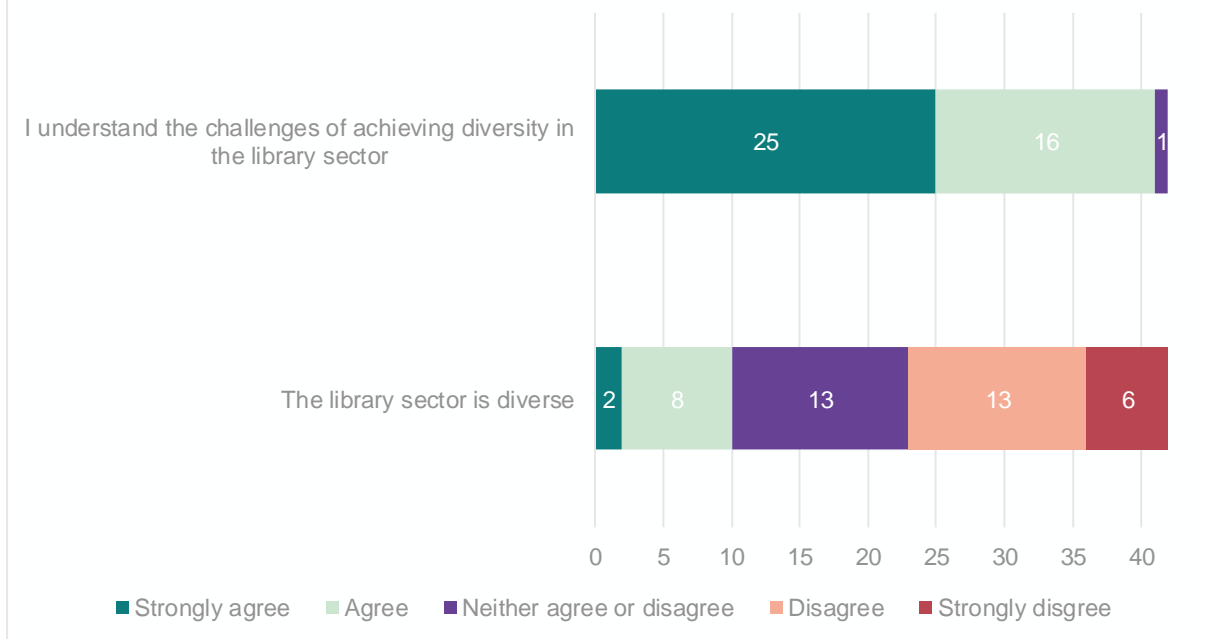
Figure 6: Perceptions and Changes on Diversity

Some participants provided comments to support their ratings. Raised awareness through the content provided by the programme and through learning from others' experienced were commonly mentioned:

> *It has opened my eyes to how we are not diverse enough.* (Powerful Talent)

> *By engaging with other authorities and hearing their own personal experiences has made me look at things differently. Things that I may have not noticed before.* (Emerging Leader)

> *Being able to hear first-hand from colleagues who have lived with and often suffered from the effects of a lack of diversity or understanding of diversity really helped me to better appreciate the complexities and issues that need to be addressed.* (Powerful Talent)

> *I had not realised how rarely women get nominated for or receive awards. It has made me think how we undervalue women, even in a profession dominated by women.* (Powerful Talent)

> *I feel I have a deeper understanding and awareness around diversity.* (Emerging Leader)

> *Think my knowledge and experience in this area were well developed and I haven't changed my attitudes but I have tried to ensure I'm thinking about it at a more strategic level linking in with my new role.* (Emerging Leader)

Some participants commented on actions they had taken, or were planning to take, in relation to diversity. Most of these were general statements, such as:

Makes sure I now keep it centre stage in everything I do. (Head of Service)

Aware and motivated to do more to be inclusive. (Powerful Talent)

However, other participants shared more concrete plans. For example:

Am trying to challenge staff and incorporate planning for diverse stock and collections into projects at the start, not as an afterthought. (Emerging Leader)

What I have learned has helped improve my confidence to deliver, influence and encourage more diverse cultural activities and events in libraries. (Emerging Leader)

I have a more determined focus on inclusion. I have set up virtual drop in fortnightly coffee mornings for all the staff so we can all chat about what we are working on, interested in and share learning no matter what your role in the service. (Head of Service)

I had attended the Libraries Connected Black stories matter webinars, which I would not have heard of unless I was part of the project. I am now hoping to be part of the Diversity working group. (Powerful Talent)

I am part of a project team who has provided lived experience, intelligence data and community proposals to our local authority in ways of making our council more culturally inclusive and we are currently shortlisted for the European Diversity Award. (Powerful Talent)

One participant suggested that they felt that diversity was not addressed as thoroughly as they might have expected it to be:

A little, but the programme didn't concentrate on diversity in as much depth as I'd hoped it would. (Head of Service)

4.2.3. Impact on Participants' Career Aspirations

Respondents were asked *'Has the programme had an impact on your career aspirations?'* Table 12 shows the responses by type of participant.

Has the programme had an impact on your career aspirations?	No	Yes	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	5	8	13
Head of Service	8	1	9
Powerful Talent	5	14	19

Grand Total	18	23	41

Table 12: Impact on Participants Career Aspirations

Over half (23/41) of the respondents reported that the programme had an impact on their career aspirations. There was a statistically significant difference in the responses from the Heads of Service group who were less likely than other groups to report an impact of the programme on career aspirations. Perhaps this is unsurprising as Heads of Services are likely to be further on in their career. A response from a Head of Service reinforced this point:

> *I am so close to retirement so probably not - but it has been exciting so makes me want to stay longer and see the change that is needed.* (Head of Service)

However, there was an exception with one Head of Service commenting:

> *I'm absolutely determined to continue to build my CV and aim to be a national library leader.* (Head of Service)

Amongst the other cohorts, the most common themes focussed around participants realising their potential and wanting to progress their career further:

> *I want to progress and believe what I have learnt can help me with that.* (Emerging Leader)

> *I never thought of myself as a leader, but the programme has made me want to look into different areas and progress further in my career.* (Emerging Leader)

> *I wish to advance in my career and I feel this course has given me the tools to develop my leadership skills.* (Powerful Talent)

A number of participants described how they had progressed their careers whilst on the programme and taking action to develop further leadership skills:

> *I have progressed into a role as a Library Manager as a result of my engagement with the programme.* (Powerful Talent)

> *I am now enrolled on a Leadership Apprenticeship Level 3 course. (Powerful Talent)*

> *I have moved into a new role in service development.* (Emerging Leader)

> *I progressed in my career from librarian to Library and Customer manager.* (Emerging Leader)

> *The two powerful talents are now going on to do a Team Leader apprenticeship within their current roles.* (Head of Service)

Encouragement and support to apply to a different role within my organisation. (Emerging Leader)

Enabled me to secure a higher role. (Powerful Talent)

Played an important role in helping me to achieve the next steps in my career as a Library Manager. (Powerful Talent)

The programme gave our 2 hidden talents the confidence to progress and they left the service during the programme. (Head of Service)

However, a few participants commented how they were questioning their career paths as a result of taking part in the programme.

It has made me decide that I do not want to be a leader in libraries, or indeed work in libraries anymore and am looking for alternate jobs. The pandemic has also contributed to this. Whilst this is not an expected outcome, I do feel I have supported well and developed my powerful talents and so am contributing to developing the future diverse workforce. (Emerging Leader)

I am not sure I want to be in a leadership role/head of a library service but I would like to broaden my experience. (Emerging Leader)

Some comments referred to the challenges of career development in the public library sector where opportunities were limited.

It had made me consider my position and made me more resentful, to be honest, of how little I earn after all these years. (Powerful Talent)

I have realised I will not be able to further my career. (Powerful Talent)

There are not many opportunities to become a leader. (Powerful Talent)

4.2.4. Additional Benefits of Participation

In addition to the many benefits of participation reported earlier, participants referred to additional benefits of participating in the programme. These covered a range of topics and included actions that participants were taking as a result of being involved in the programme.

Networking and building relationships

Participants appreciated being able to network and work alongside colleagues in their service and in the wider library community.

New networks certainly. I feel I now have colleagues across the country and can approach them for advice etc. (Powerful Talent)

New contacts in other library authorities. (Powerful Talent)

Reconnecting with my profession. Being very proud of being able to access this programme and being humbled by all the other amazing colleagues I met on the course. (Head of Service)

Working with colleagues

Some participants referred to the way in which they had worked with colleagues within their service. Some participants specifically mentioned improved relationships with managers and other staff. Some felt the Pods and Quad structure had contributed to this.

Getting the most out of colleagues as they're operate on different levels. (Powerful Talent)

Using tips I learned to motivate and engage the teams to look at the goals we are trying to achieve. (Powerful Talent)

I think I have better recognition of my ability from senior management. (Powerful Talent)

Helped me work with my manager. (Powerful Talent)

Involvement in projects

Some participants had become more involved in projects through participation in the programme.

I now have involvement with projects that directly affect my service - recruitment, creation of induction policy and programme for new staff. (Powerful Talent)

I have become involved in various projects and was able to implement techniques I learnt about during the programme. (Powerful Talent)

I felt I have used a lot of what I have learned into a new project for libraries - developing artist in residency programmes where community collaboration has been key. Also - the learning has informed a new project consulting with families around running inclusive activities & events for families and children with SEND. (Emerging Leader)

A few participants referred to the value of continued work on their strategic challenge.

We have worked on our strategic challenge and that is ongoing. (Powerful Talent)

My team and I have continued to work on our strategic challenge and have used some of the exercises we learned in the programme to connect with wider teams and communicate effectively. (Emerging Leader)

Increased confidence

Some participants commented on increased confidence.

I definitely became more confident and opened to the leadership idea. I understood the difference between being a leader and a manager. (Powerful Talent)

I feel more confident in my role. (Emerging Leader)

Given me the confidence to work more with senior managers in other departments. (Powerful Talent)

Gaining confidence in myself was the most important. (Emerging Leader)

Two participants reported that increased confidence had helped them to apply for more senior job roles.

Self-awareness, reflection and personal development

The programme also had an impact on self-awareness, reflection and personal development for many participants:

This programme has taken my personal development to another level. (Powerful Talent)

The Leading Libraries programme has aided both my personal and professional development. (Powerful Talent)

It has allowed me to self-reflect and re-evaluate how I see myself as a manager and potential leader. I no longer fall back on reasons for not feeling confident like "imposter syndrome" for example. (Emerging Leader)

I learnt to step back from my leadership style and learn skills that will enable me to be a better leader and also to challenge myself. (Emerging Leader)

Particular course content mentioned in relation to reflection included:

- In/out groups
- Mindfulness
- Asking questions
- Active listening

There was also evidence that some participants had implemented skills and knowledge gained through the course for the potential benefit of other staff too:

Focusing on providing more opportunities for individual staff and teams to contribute to service development by running e.g. pilots, to learn from what works well and what does not and also how that supports learning & development. (Head of Service)

I have started working on supporting more people across the service in their development. (Head of Service)

A different approach to recruitment to encourage younger applicants. (Head of Service)

Using tips I learned to motivate and engage the teams to look at the goals we are trying to achieve. (Powerful Talent)

4.2.5. The Strategic Challenge

Many participants reported positive personal impacts from taking part in the strategic challenge.

In July 2021, participants completed an evaluation survey focussing specifically on the strategic challenge. This showed that most participants reported that working on the strategic challenge had helped them reflect on their development and provided an opportunity to put some of the skills and insights gained through the Leading Libraries programme into action. Examples included:

- Time management
- Understanding their role within the service
- Realising the control and influence they exert
- Delegation
- Trust
- Listening skills
- Making better decisions
- Thinking strategically
- Creativity
- Understanding strengths and weaknesses
- Interaction with colleagues
- The role of feedback
- Encouraging stakeholder involvement
- Communication skills
- Budgeting

In relation to leadership specifically, participants felt that working on their strategic challenge had:

- Encouraged thinking about preferred leadership styles
- Broadened the understanding of leadership
- Provided a greater understanding of how to be an effective leader
- Encouraged appreciation of different perspectives.

In addition to the development of leadership skills directly, many participants reported that the experience had increased their confidence and, in particular, helped them to connect with colleges and external organisations. It had also empowered them to be more determined, to question more and to develop new ideas.

Participants reported that the strategic challenge has provided them with new insights concerning their role, their colleagues and their service. Examples included:

Until now I had not realised that I was leading people. (Powerful Talent)

This has made me evaluate my role and what part I play in working towards achieving the goal set out in our strategic challenge. (Powerful Talent)

The process had also prompted several participants to reflect on how others perceived them:

It's made me reassess the impact my position has on others. (Head of Service)

I have been reminded how people look to me as a head of service to be a role model. That means I need to own that and demonstrate the skills and behaviours I am looking for in colleagues. (Head of Service)

For others, the process had led to new insights on their approach to leadership and management:

In terms of my own role, it has allowed me to think more formally about the way that I manage and how this has been influenced by my previous roles. (Powerful Talent)

Working on their strategic challenge had also prompted some participants to reflect on the possibilities for their future learning and development:

Given me an idea of who I could progress into becoming if I continue working on my leadership skills and allowing myself to grow. (Powerful Talent)

The most common insight in relation to colleagues was how it was good to work with colleagues, exchange ideas, but also find out more about colleagues and better appreciate their talents:

Seen more clearly the skills and knowledge of staff I have known a long time, seen how clearly this opportunity has given them space and time to really demonstrate and grow them. (Emerging Leader)

It has made me listen and appreciate my colleagues both within the cohort and in the service as a whole, while recognising everyone has a contribution to make. I am so much more aware of the adaptability of staff within the library service and want to play a part in the way forward after COVID. (Powerful Talent)

Many participants reported new insights concerning their service. This included an increased realisation that they can make a difference and deliver change regardless of role and more awareness of how leadership affects the service.

A small number of participants expressed frustration at not getting as much as they had hoped for from working on the strategic challenge. Some referred to team dynamics as a challenge and one participant reported having a role which only provided limited responsibility and autonomy to make decisions.

A few reported a disconnect between the approach to leadership being taught on the Leading Libraries programme and the more 'institutionalised' and hierarchical way that their service (and more broadly the local authority) operate, meaning the transition to an alternative style of leadership is likely to be challenging:

I have learnt that the method of leadership we are learning is not how our council works and I am restricted how we can utilise the knowledge I have gained from this course. (Powerful Talent)

Further details of the impact of the strategic challenge can be found in Section 5.1.

4.2.6. Negative Impacts

Respondents were explicitly asked '*Have there been any negative unintended consequences of taking part in the programme (for you or your service)?*

Have there been any negative unintended consequences of taking part in the programme (for you or your service)?	No	Yes	Grand Total
Emerging Leader	8	5	13
Head of Service	8	1	9
Powerful Talent	14	5	19
Grand Total	30	11	41

Table 13: Any Negative Unintended Consequences of taking part in the Programme

Approximately a quarter of participants reported negative consequences of taking part in the programme. Some open-ended comments were provided to support these ratings. Topics mentioned included those already covered earlier in the report, for example: time constraints, recruitment issues, team dynamics, pressures

of the pandemic, other priorities leaving little time to share what has been learned within the wider service and changes in career path.

4.3. Capabilities Development

The Leading Libraries programme was designed around the development of the following four leadership capabilities:

- Resilience
- Dialogue
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Innovation

The summative survey provided a number of statements relating to each of these four capabilities and asked participants to rate themselves. These reflected similar statements asked in the baseline survey in order to provide an element of comparison with the summative data. The following provides the data by capability type.

Where there has been a statistically significant difference in scores between the baseline and summative scores this is indicated by an asterisk.

4.3.1. Resilience

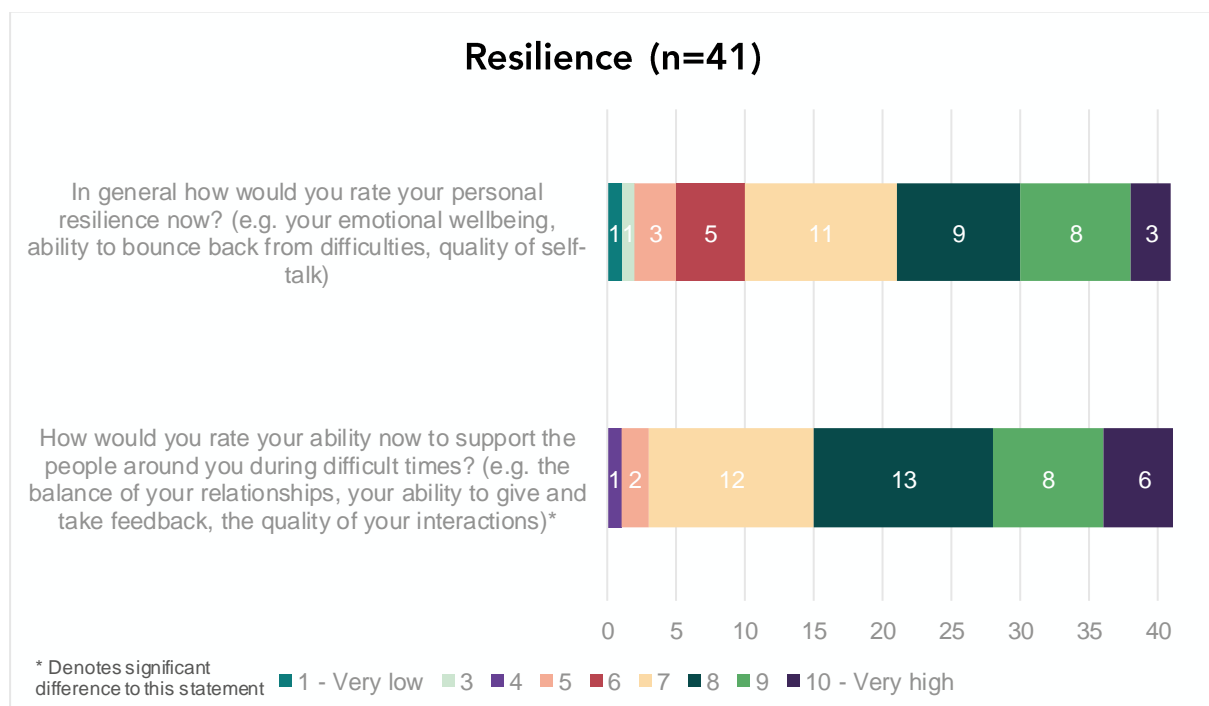Figure 7 shows respondent's ratings for resilience.

Figure 7: Resilience

There was a statistically significant improvement across the cohort in participants ability to support people around them during difficult times.

Some participants referred to the impact they felt the programme had had on their improved ability to support others.

> *We're on our second restructure in pandemic times and I've been able to support people in making difficult decisions about the future roles and whether to take retirement/severance/try for new jobs etc. I have done this with greater compassion, professionalism than previously, but put the service at the centre of all discussions.* (Emerging Leader)

> *I feel adept at supporting people around me particularly since the start of the pandemic. I feel I always make myself available to my team and feel strongly about creating a supportive and positive work environment.* (Powerful Talent)

> *A very difficult situation arose for our service that knocked me and my team for six. However, I helped them and myself through the situation by remembering to employ some of the techniques learned in the resilience sessions.* (Head of Service)

The comments about personal resilience, however, were more mixed:

> *After the last year or so I have worked on this and feel I am at a strong point where not much fazes me. I'm regularly dealing with very challenging and difficult situations and I do feel I have good mechanisms in place to cope well with this.* (Powerful Talent)

> *I am better at supporting others than myself.* (Powerful Talent)

> *Things were particularly challenging during and after the programme so I currently don't feel fully resilient but I have been able to support others.* (Emerging Leader)

Some of the aspects of the programme related to resilience participants had found useful included:

- Learning techniques to help yourself to help others
- Understanding the motivations of staff
- Managing stress and frustration
- Self-belief
- Understanding of resilience and tools to manage this
- Receiving feedback
- Self-awareness
- Risk-taking

Participants were asked if there was anything they had hoped to learn about resilience but were not able to through the programme. Suggestions include the following:

Long term management, but I feel this could be a course in itself. (Powerful Talent)

More of an acknowledgement that sometimes challenges are a result of material circumstances that a change of attitude can't necessarily fix. (Emerging Leader)

More tips especially around mental health. (Powerful Talent)

4.3.2. Dialogue

Figure 8 shows respondent's ratings for dialogue.

Dialogue (n=41)

How would you rate your listening skills now?(e.g. ability to pay attention, listen actively, learn from others views and experience)*
2 | 1 | 10 | 17 | 8 | 3

How would you rate your inquiry skills now?(e.g. the quality of your questions, your balance between advocacy and inquiry)*
3 | 11 | 16 | 10 | 1

How would you rate your ability now to facilitate conversations in the groups you work in?(e.g. set the tone of the conversation, support inclusive participation, help to organise the groups thinking)*
1 | 11 | 16 | 11 | 2

* Denotes significant difference to this statement

■ 5 - Moderate ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 - Very high

Figure 8: Dialogue

There was a statistically significant improvement across the cohort in all areas of dialogue covered by the programme.

The following are examples participants provided of how their dialogue skills had improved as a result of the programme.

- **Listening (including active listening and levels of listening)**

  I listen better and try to identify potential obstacles. (Emerging Leader)

- **Inquiry and questioning skills**

  I ask better questions! (I hope) to help with enquiry. (Head of Service)

- **Confidence with voicing opinions**

  My confidence has grown a lot in speaking out in group meetings. (Emerging Leader)

- Considering and supporting others

  More aware of the need to consider other people's perspective/situations. (Emerging Leader)

- Facilitating conversations (including different channels of dialogue)

  Facilitating conversations and setting the tone. (Head of Service)

Participants were asked if there was anything they had hoped to learn about dialogue but were not able to through the programme. Suggestions were:

More on having difficult conversations. (Emerging Leader)

More about negotiation. (Head of Service)

4.3.3. Inclusion
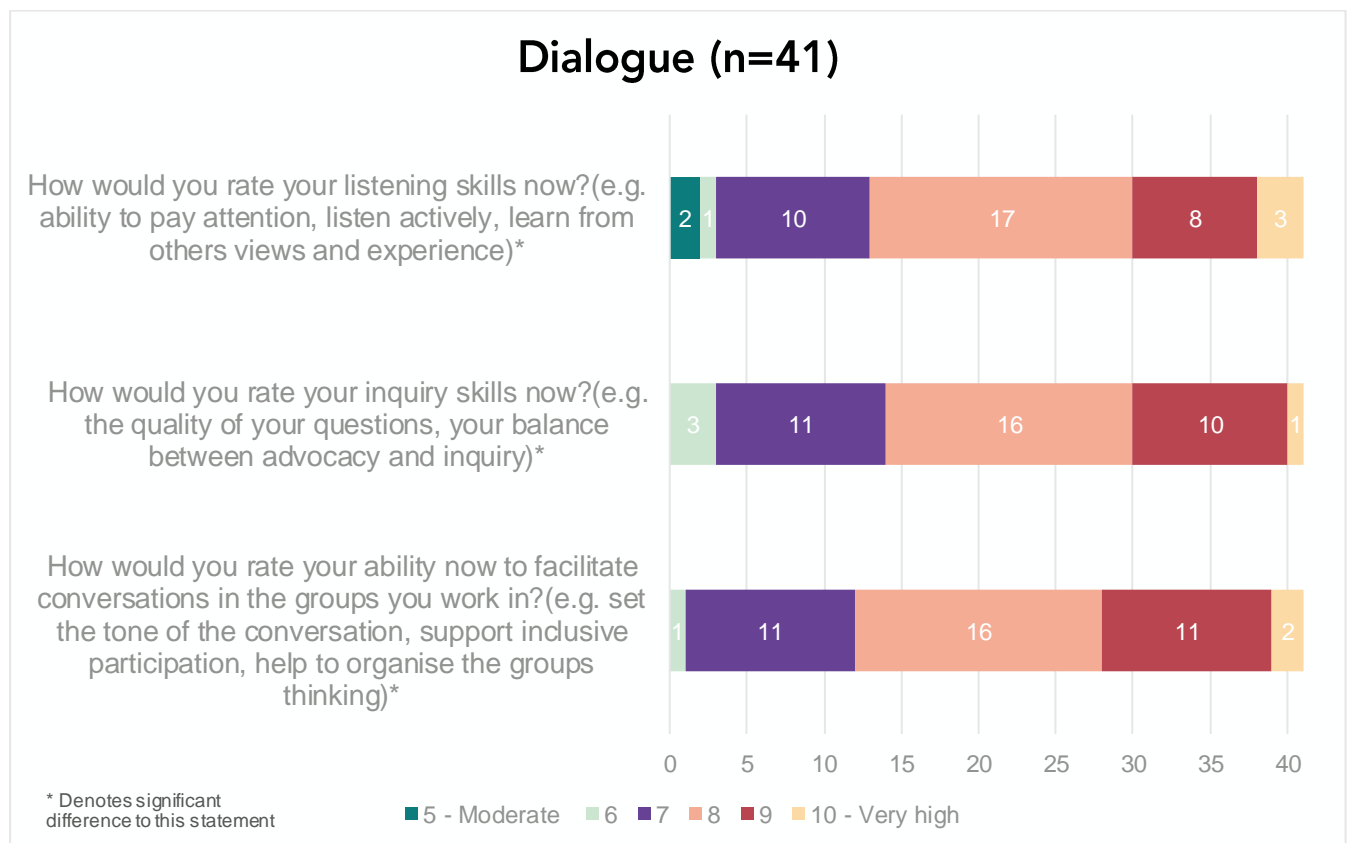
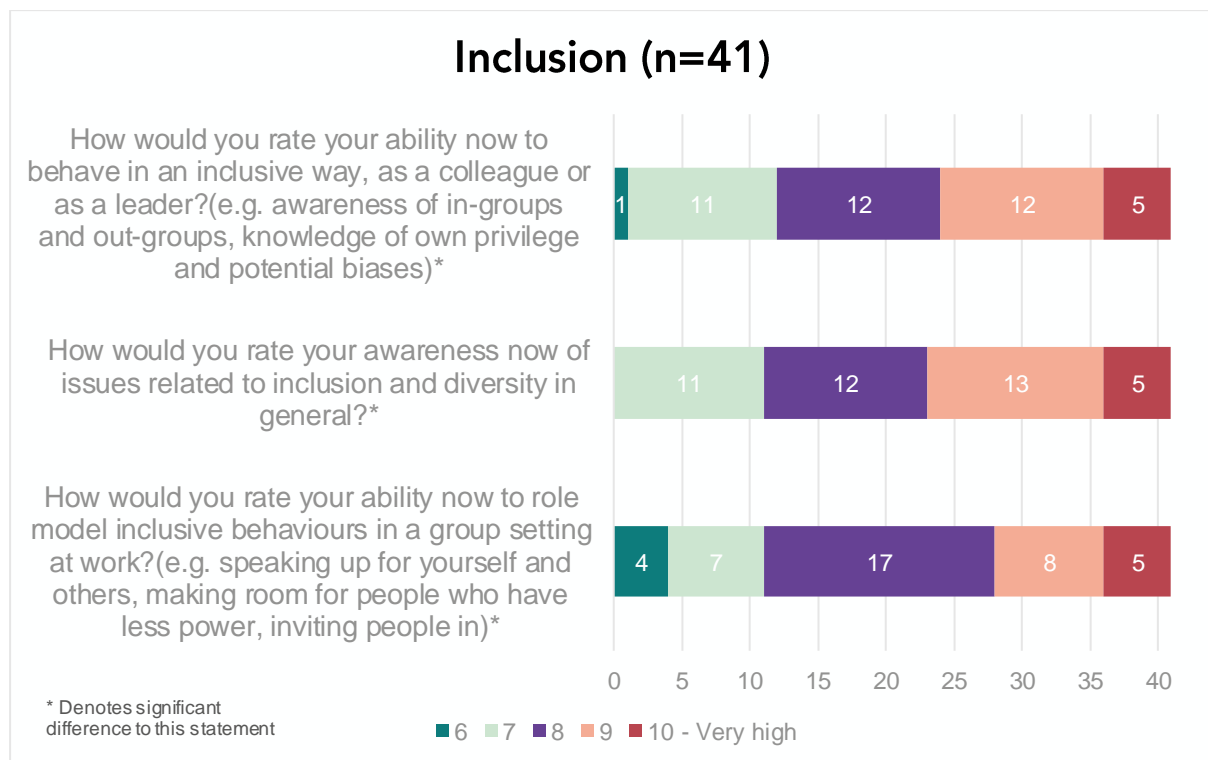Figure 9 shows respondent's ratings for inclusion.

Figure 9: Inclusion

There was a statistically significant[8] improvement across the cohort in all areas of inclusion covered by the programme. Participants described some of the ways in

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[8] Statistical significant means being confident that there is a difference or relationship between two variables that has not simply occurred by chance.

which the programme had impacted on their awareness and skills in relation to inclusion and diversity.

I have worked in a more co-productive manner with more underrepresented groups than I had before I and feedback or facilitated those conversations to influence change. (Powerful Talent)

I aim to be inclusive and be aware of my own privilege. I aim to use my own power to effectively empower others. (Powerful Talent)

I found it hugely beneficial to have conversations about inclusiveness and diversity within the group sessions and was interested to understands others perspectives and gain an understanding of what they understood being inclusive to be…We continue to have these conversations as managers and within our teams and being on this programme has helped me further my understanding. (Powerful Talent)

I feel that I have the ability now to question myself in my work - am I doing enough to be inclusive and what can I change, influence in others or improve in my own practice? (Emerging Leader)

I have been trying to actively bring the idea of stock and diversity to our librarians, as well as develop my understanding of others around me. (Powerful Talent)

However, a few reflected on issues that remained that were uncertain how to address:

It's hard to speak up for yourself and others sometimes in less familiar groups. It's hard to make room for those with less power or invite them in if they lack confidence. Not sure what to do about silence. (Powerful Talent)

The following are examples participants provided of how their own inclusion and diversity skills and understanding had improved as a result of the programme.

Just being aware of others' views and more open to hearing them. (Emerging Leader)

By being more aware of things happening around me, I was blind to any issues that happened before or felt it wasn't up to me to get involved as it didn't directly affect me, but now I want to actively get involved. (Emerging Leader)

It has made me more aware of how I interact with others and how I could be more inclusive. (Powerful Talent)

Others described how their involvement in the programme had also had an impact on colleagues.

Lots of areas - especially challenging staff to think more widely about recruitment and project planning. (Emerging Leader)

The Quad and Pod team work has helped me to develop my teamwork skills. My abilities to participate listen to others and find ways to include others have grown as a result. (Powerful Talent)

Giving space to everyone so their voice is heard. (Head of Service)

Some other aspects cited included listening, acceptance, confidence, talking and privilege.

Participants were asked if there was anything they had hoped to learn about inclusion and diversity but weren't able to through this programme. Three provided suggestions:

Attracting a diverse workforce. (Emerging Leader)

Some recommended reading material which can help understand the need for diversity to gain more outside perspective. (Powerful Talent)

Would have liked more in depth discussion of good practice around recruiting a diverse workforce and developing staff, to stay with us. (Powerful Talent)

4.3.4. Innovation

Figure 10 shows respondents' ratings for innovation.

Innovation (n=41)

How would you rate your knowledge now of the processes and techniques of service innovation?*

2 | 4 | 11 | 14 | 10

How would you rate your personal ability now to innovate and make changes in your day-to-day work? (e.g. ability to explore and inquire into issues, generate new ideas, experiment with changes)*

2 | 5 | 11 | 8 | 14 | 1

How would you rate your ability now to support your colleagues when they are making changes?(e.g. offering feedback and asking good questions, being creative together, accepting and learning from failure)*

1 | 1 | 7 | 15 | 14 | 3

0   5   10   15   20   25   30   35   40

* Denotes significant difference to this statement
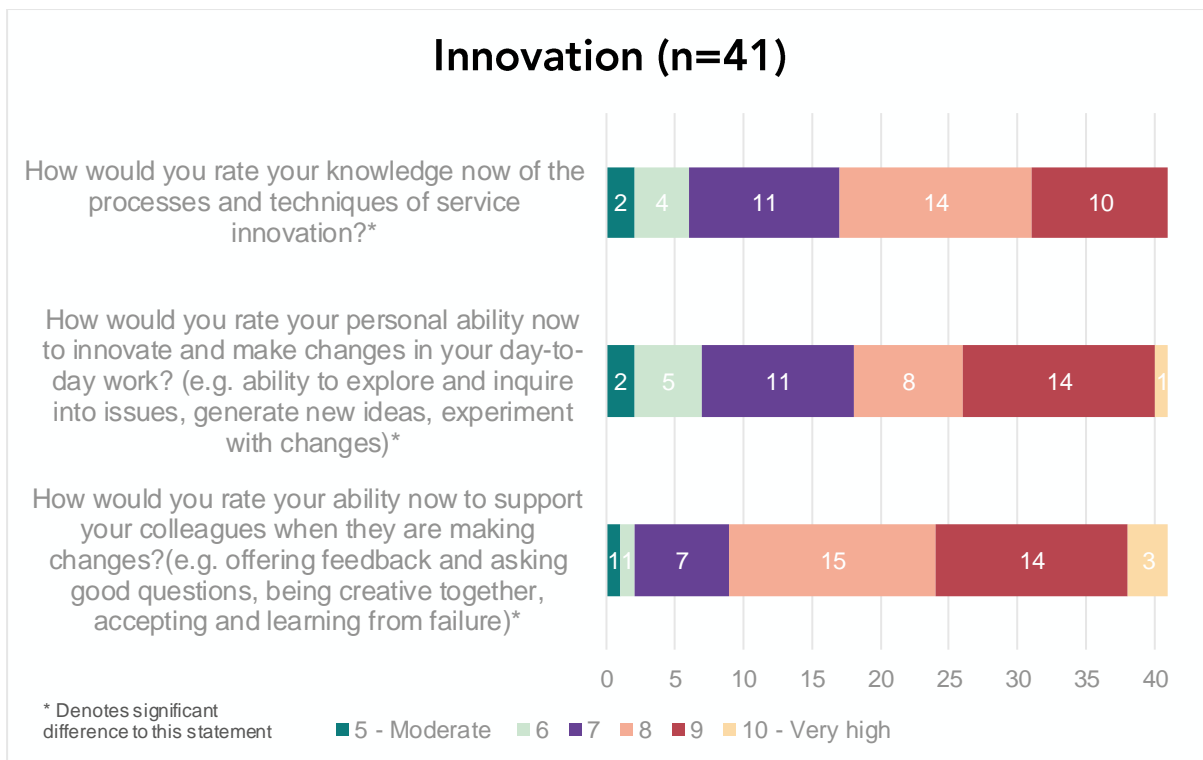
■ 5 - Moderate ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10 - Very high

Figure 10: Innovation

There was a statistically significant improvement across the cohort in all areas of inclusion and diversity covered by the programme.

Some participants described how they hoped to put learning from the course regarding innovation into practice:

> *I would like to use the innovation tools and techniques I have learned more within my role.* (Powerful Talent)

> *I have started to look into a new project and have implemented some of the tools given on the course, such as strategic plans and flow charts of development.* (Powerful Talent)

For those who experienced challenges in innovating, structures within their service or local authority were often mentioned as a barrier:

> *We have a way to go with this as LAs are hierarchical, so breaking through ceilings takes time.* (Emerging Leader)

> *My lower rating on this question is more a result of the scope of my role and the constraints of working for a very large organisation where change can be slow.* (Emerging Leader)

> *My ability to be innovative isn't an issue and nor is my supporting colleagues' changes, but I worry that due to the current structure in our council, Library Assistants are not given a certain amount of ability or power to implement any changes.* (Powerful Talent)

The following are examples participants provided of how their innovation skills and understanding had improved as a result of the programme.

- Better understanding of prototyping and experimentation

  The notion of prototyping and just having a go. (Powerful Talent)

- Reflection

  Just remembering to take a step back before rushing into projects. (Powerful Talent)

- Confidence and self-belief

  Confidence. (Emerging Leader)

- Teamwork/Peers/Collaborative working both within and across library services

  Working collaboratively and this programme gave me the opportunity to make new contacts and gain good insights into how other library authorities work. I hope to stay in touch with some of those we met in the hope of working on joint projects. (Powerful Talent)

  To take a more collaborative approach to make things happen - so that more people have buy in and share their creative skills and innovate together. To pull on all resources available including the community we serve to create the conditions for change. (Emerging Leader)

- Innovation in service design

  I have gained a much greater understanding of innovation and service design throughout the programme. (Powerful Talent)

- Making the most of opportunities

  I try to look for opportunities out of the box. (Emerging Leader)

- Using evidence and evaluation

  I have improved my way of scoping and how to collect and analyse data. (Powerful Talent)

- Creative thinking

  Broader creative ways of thinking in a work-based environment. (Powerful Talent)

- **Empowering and motivating others**

  Empowering others to make changes. (Head of Service)

4.4. Summary: Impact on Participants

- Generally, participants considered that the programme was important in contributing to many areas of leadership and personal development. This included elements such as: broadening perspectives on leadership; developing others; increasing self-awareness; and increasing confidence as a leader.

- Comparison of participants' responses to statements between the summative and baseline evaluation surveys showed that participants felt the programme had contributed to their understanding and practice of a range of areas of leadership. There were particularly significant changes in areas such as: knowing what makes a good leader; thinking of oneself as a leader; and the belief that participants possess effective leadership skills.

- For most respondents the programme had either changed, expanded or reinforced their views of the challenges of being a leader.

- For many participants the Leading Libraries programme has contributed to changing perceptions around issues of diversity with all but one summative evaluation survey respondent reported an increased understanding of the challenges of achieving diversity in the library sector. Some participants reported on actions and projects they were undertaking to address diversity issues.

- Over half of the summative survey respondents reported that the programme had had an impact on their career aspirations. Unsurprisingly this was less the case with Heads of Service and more common amongst Emerging Leaders and Powerful Talent. Some participants had changed roles and got new jobs whilst undertaking the programme and reported that the programme had been an influential factor in progressing their career. A frustration reported by some participants was limited career opportunities within their service or the public library sector as a whole.

- Participants enjoyed additional benefits of participating in the programme. These included: developing networks; improved working relationships with colleagues; involvement in projects; increased confidence; more self-awareness and reflection.

- The programme focussed on four key leadership capabilities: resilience; dialogue; inclusion and diversity; and innovation. Across the cohort the programme had contributed to participants development in these areas as measured by comparing baseline and summative evaluation ratings. In most areas there was a statistically significant improvement in participants

5. Impact on Services

As well as having an impact on individual programme participants, the Leading Libraries Programme sought to have an impact on the wider services of participating organisations.

In the summative evaluation survey participants were asked if they considered that the Leading Libraries programme had had an impact on the service.

Has your involvement in the programme had an impact on your service?	Don't know	No	Yes	Grand Total
Grand Total	16	3	22	41

Table 14:Impact on Service

Table 14 shows that at the time of the summative evaluation survey, over half of the survey respondents (22/41) considered that their involvement in the programme had already had an impact on their service. Some respondents provided comments to support their response. General comments included:

> Yes, my involvement in the programme has contributed to the medium and long term aspirations of our service. (Powerful Talent)

> It's involved all staff so many people have benefitted. (Head of Service)

Some participants commented how the skills and understanding they gained through the programme would feed into and benefit the wider service:

> Improved skills and performance of staff. (Head of Service)

> I feel like we are committed to using the skills learnt to improve the service. (Emerging Leader)

> Development of skills of 3 members of the team. (Head of Service)

> The positive experience for our hidden talents. (Head of Service)

Some participants referred to fostering more awareness of, and activity to support, inclusion and diversity:

> It has sparked helpful conversations about diversity. (Emerging Leader)

> Going forward diversity in our workforce is a key priority. (Powerful Talent)

> We are also trying to be more inclusive and involving a wider range of staff in projects/initiatives to give an opportunity for people to broaden their experience which will support their progressing and development. (Head of Service)

Some participants referred to improved communication and staff development:

> *I have used my leadership to improve communication between teams.* (Powerful Talent)

> *Ensured that I have put training and development of staff at the core of our planning.* (Head of Service)

> *Service now has an induction programme and policy.* (Powerful Talent)

Participants also referred to improved networks and relationships beyond the library service:

> *Stronger links to other council departments.* (Head of Service)

> *I have contributed to lots of community involvement.* (Powerful Talent)

> *Wider connections established with other library services.* (Head Of Service)

Over one third of survey respondents (16/41) indicated that they did not know if their involvement in the programme had impacted their service. A few respondents provided supporting comments indicating that it was too early to assess the impact of the programme on the service:

> *Perhaps too early to say, need to find ways to continue and mainstream this work.* (Head of Service)

> *I feel that we need to do more work on measuring the impact of our involvement on our service.* (Powerful Talent)

> *We haven't fully implemented our challenge yet, so only time will tell.* (Emerging Leader)

5.1. Strategic Challenge Impact on Service

The strategic challenge projects that the participants were involved in addressed a real issue within the library service and was one way in which the programme activity could contribute to having an impact on a service.

The strategic challenges addressed a range of topics which would be of relevance to many library services today. These included: improving diversity in the workforce; understanding and improving the digital offer; engaging, involving and supporting young people; and maximising the value of the library in the community.

Some of the responses to the summative survey referred specifically to the positive impact that working on the strategic challenge provided to the service:

The strategic challenge continues to make a difference in a very challenging community. We made great strides to raise our profile and are slowly building trust. (Emerging Leader)

Practical elements of the challenge that we have put into practice have had an impact e.g. significant changes to our recruitment process and approach has seen positive feedback from a recent recruitment exercise and helped change people's feelings about being more flexible and open about different approaches. (Emerging Leader)

Our project is very real and will see real results. (Head of Service)

Some referred to how the work on the strategic challenge provided a way for more than just the staff participating in the Leading Libraries programme to benefit:

More staff have been given the opportunity to develop their skills, participate in our project and think creatively, not just those of us in the quad. (Emerging Leader)

As discussed earlier local circumstances had an impact on the extent to which strategic challenges were delivered and the impact they had. One participant reflected on changes which had adversely affected the delivery of the strategic challenge in one service:

The strategic challenge was redundant for us. (Powerful Talent)

Despite this, most participants reported a range of positive outcomes as a result of working on their strategic challenges. While it was not within the remit of the Leading Libraries programme to undertake a detailed evaluation of the impact of each individual strategic challenge, some evidence of the impact of the strategic challenge on participating services emerged from presentations at the July 2021 Full Cohort meeting and the Leading Libraries Final Conference on 9th March 2022.

To date, seven of the participating library services have contributed information to produce case studies about their strategic challenge. These provide valuable examples of the impact that this work is having on these participating services.

Some of the examples of outcomes and impact reported to date include:

- Improving library spaces and resources
- Providing volunteering and apprenticeship opportunities for young people
- Developing new programmes of events to engage communities
- Increasing library membership
- Involving staff and the community in new projects
- Developing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan
- Understanding and improving the digital offer
- Upskilling staff with digital skills

- Developing innovative approaches to storytelling which involve a range of staff from within the service
- Supporting artists with digital delivery
- Reaching new audiences through digital delivery
- Contributing to Covid recovery
- Understanding and evaluating events to improve value and impact

Some of the case study feedback provides examples of the wide-ranging impacts of strategic challenge activity:

"The strategic challenge has given us a blueprint for the future in terms of how we work across our wider service, to involve a wider team of staff, which will help to build capacity and also confidence. And we also now have a really clear way forward as to how we can engage much more effectively with young people who want to use our service". (Staffordshire)

"The library service is now more firmly embedded within the wider organisational conversation around both Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and recruitment, with representation at corporate working groups and workstreams". (Cambridgeshire)

"Information like this helps us to bid for commissions. Recently a £100k commission to deliver a digital welfare offer has been secured and the council are now looking to libraries to deliver a lot of their service offering". (Surrey)

"Created enthusiasm for the concept of everyone being empowered to be a leader in their own chair so has led to us thinking about culture change required to facilitate that". (Dorset)

5.2. Contribution of the Leading Libraries Programme to the Strategic Challenges

The case study information also demonstrates a range of ways in which what participants had learned on the Leading Libraries programme had fed into the delivery of the strategic challenge. The following are examples of this:

The strategic challenge provided a means of putting theory into practice and a focus for activity:

The way that at the beginning of this project, everything that we spoke about was theory, and it didn't actually seem like we were going to be able to do what we wanted to do because of the pandemic. So to actually to be at the other side of it now and actually implementing things I think is just fantastic. (Redbridge)

Giving the project structure and focus, which made it possible for us to put time aside the progress it even amidst the challenges of the pandemic". (Cambridgeshire)

This project would not have come about without the Leading Libraries Programme. It was during discussions about what an effective project might look like that the idea was suggested by one of the participants and taken on with enthusiasm by other members of the group. (North Tyneside)

The programme as a whole was really effective in providing a framework for action learning and a model for leading within this context in often complex circumstances. (Staffordshire)

Working on the strategic challenge enabled some staff to further develop the leadership capabilities which underpinned the programme:

One key word that I've taken from that is resilience. The way the project has progressed over the last two years has shown me a lot about myself, when dealing with different people, change, unpredictable situations, and in our library service in our library services and general life. And it's given me skills and tools to develop, adapt, persevere and thrive through tough times. (Redbridge)

We learned to take a slower paced, more considered approach to developing and running projects with more emphasis on understanding different views, gathering insights, analysing data, exchanging ideas, understanding our own skills set and having more reflective conversations before making any key decisions. (Staffordshire)

Allowing us to develop our skills and confidence in presenting the project to a wide range of audience, including the Library Leadership Team, colleagues from HR, the Area Library Manager Away Day, and other library services as part of the programme. (Cambridgeshire)

Made us think about really listening to colleagues, not just paying lip service to listening, we might be listening but are we 'hearing properly. (Dorset)

We've learned it's okay to fail. We've learned that working with lots of different colleagues is really helpful. We've definitely learned how to become more resilient. (Nottingham)

Some examples were provided of how the strategic challenge projects had contributed to increased collaboration and cooperation:

Throughout the leading libraries programme, we learned to take a collaborative approach and to explore, understand and learn more about different perspectives and individuals' backgrounds in order to provide a meaningful experience. We learned the importance of allyship and that

bringing people in on the journey from the beginning helped to provide the best service and outcomes for everyone involved. (Staffordshire).

Creating collaborative relationships within the project team, with the benefit of our different perspectives, skills, and areas of reach within the service. (Cambridgeshire).

Reference was made to how the strategic challenge projects had contributed to empowering staff and raising confidence:

The whole experience helped to build everyone's confidence; we learned to value ourselves and each other and to pull our skills and resources together to make a difference. (Staffordshire)

Empowered our staff to grow the business and created a culture of ambition and really sown the seeds for that success. (Surrey)

5.3. Summary: Impact on Service

- At the time of the summative evaluation survey, over half of the survey respondents considered that the programme had already had an impact on their service.

- Some participants referred to specific ways in which the skills and understanding they gained on the programme would feed into and benefit the wider service including: supporting inclusion and diversity; improving communication and staff development; and strengthening networks and relationships beyond the library service.

- Over one third of survey respondents indicated that they did not know if their involvement in the programme had impacted their service at that point in time. Some considered it too early to assess the impact. Local circumstances could also affect the extent to which the outcomes of the programme would have an impact.

- The strategic challenges that the participants were involved in addressed a real issue within the library service and was one way in which the programme activity could contribute to having an impact on a service.

- The strategic challenges addressed a range of topics including: improving diversity in the workforce; understanding and improving the digital offer; engaging, involving and supporting young people; and maximising the value of the library in the community.

- Many participants reported a range of positive outcomes as a result of working on their strategic challenges. This included wider impacts beyond programme participants.

- To date, seven of the participating library services have contributed information to produce case studies about their strategic challenge. These provide valuable examples of the impact that this work is having on these participating services.

- Some of the examples of outcomes and impact from the case studies include: improving library spaces and resources; providing volunteering and apprenticeship opportunities for young people; developing new programmes of events to engage communities; involving staff and the community in new projects; developing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan; understanding and improving the digital offer; and understanding and evaluating events to improve the value and impact of the library service.

- Some case study feedback highlights examples of ways in which what participants had learned on the Leading Libraries programme had fed into the delivery of the strategic challenge. Examples include putting theory into practice and providing a focus for activity; enabling staff to further develop the leadership capabilities underpinning the programme; fostering increased collaboration and cooperation

6. Wider Impact

The Leading Libraries programme was designed to have a long-term impact by contributing to activities such as sector succession planning and developing people with leadership skills to support the sector to respond to leadership challenges in new ways.

It is acknowledged that these impacts are likely to be realised far beyond the timescale of the programme. As a result, this evaluation can only point to outputs and outcomes achieved during the course of the programme and future plans which it is hoped will contribute to longer-term impact within the public library sector.

Proven Models of Course Delivery

The Leading Libraries Programme has produced a model of course delivery that has worked well. For example, through a mixture of Quads, Pods and Network meetings it has been possible to facilitate support, dialogue, networking and learning at an inter service level as well as between services. In addition, the programme has explored the provision of inspiring and relevant content and its delivery in online environments. Lessons learned about programme delivery and design will, and already have, fed into the development of further courses.

Online Learning Programme

Staff at the Birmingham Leadership Institute in collaboration with Libraries Connected and CILIP are producing an online learning programme. Based around the four Leading Libraries leadership capabilities and these multimedia resources will be made available to all library staff via Libraries Connected's Learning Pool platform and CILIP's e-learning hub.

Leadership Short Course

Inspired by the Leading Libraries programme a short version of the programme was commissioned and delivered. This had a focus on participants of female and BAME backgrounds and reflects the ongoing desire of Libraries Connected and other organisations to support diversity in leadership within the library workforce.

Sharing Outcomes of the Strategic Challenge Projects

The strategic challenges undertaken by participating services demonstrate a range of the capabilities embodied in the Leading Libraries programme including leadership, innovation, dialogue and inclusion. The strategic challenge projects address real world issues that other library services may be faced with. As a result, the outputs of these projects can be of value to inspire and guide other library

services wishing to work on similar challenges. Libraries Connected and CILIP are planning activities to showcase the outcomes of the Leading Libraries strategic Challenges in order to share approaches and lessons learned more widely within the sector.

Changing Perceptions of Leadership

Influenced by leadership models such "21st Century Public Servant", "Intent based leadership" and collaborative and dispersed leadership approaches, the programme has shown how any member of library staff can display leadership regardless of role or position. It has demonstrated how leadership talent can be recognised and enabled wherever it exists in the service, reflecting the definition of professionalism developed by CILIP.

The programme has contributed to changing perceptions of leadership and inclusion and has already influenced thinking and practice within sector wide organisations such as Libraries Connected and CILIP. It is expected that through the ongoing work of participating individuals and library services these expanded perceptions of leadership will cascade further throughout each service and the sector more widely.

CILIP's Professional Knowledge and Skills Base (PKSB) and Professional Registration was promoted to participants during the final taught session as a good way to build on the experience of this programme, to encourage ongoing connection to the wider sector, to continue to develop and formally recognise reflective practice, network-build and understand impact within their own organisations.

Participants' Ongoing Contribution and Influence

During the course of the Leading Libraries programme some participants have already progressed in their careers, taken on new roles and contributed to sector initiatives

The programme has contributed to developing valuable leadership capabilities in members of the library workforce. This includes more understanding of issues around diversity, expanded networks and increased confidence to lead within any environment.

It is expected that the influence of these individual participants will be felt further within their existing services and throughout the diverse paths that their careers may take.

6.1. Summary: Wider Impact

- The Leading Libraries programme was designed to have a long-term impact by contributing to activities such as sector succession planning and developing staff with leadership skills to support the sector to respond to leadership challenges in new ways. There are a range of outputs which already show ways in which the Leading Libraries programme is and could have a wider impact.

- The Leading Libraries Programme has produced a model of course delivery that has worked well. Lessons learned about programme delivery and design will, and already have, fed into the development of further courses.

- An online learning programme has been produced focussing on the four Leading Libraries leadership capabilities and these multimedia resources will be made available to all library staff.

- Inspired by the Leading Libraries programme a short version of the programme was commissioned and delivered. This had a focus on participants of female and BAME backgrounds and reflects the ongoing desire of Libraries Connected and other organisations to support diversity in leadership within the library workforce.

- The strategic challenge projects address real world issues that other library services may be faced with. Libraries Connected and CILIP are planning activities to showcase the outcomes of the Leading Libraries strategic Challenges in order to share approaches and lessons learned more widely within the sector.

  CILIP's Professional Knowledge and Skills Base (PKSB) and Professional Registration was promoted to participants during the final taught session as a good way to build on the experience of this programme.,

7. Summary

The evaluation has shown that the Leading Libraries programme has had a positive impact on the four areas that it sought to investigate.

Programme Design and Delivery

Overall, the set-up, design and delivery of the programme has been successful. The Covid-19 pandemic presented a significant challenge and the delivery team worked diligently to adapt the programme to an online mode of delivery and review the approach throughout.

It was hoped that the programme would attract a more diverse range of participants, however, recruitment to the programme was managed by each service and took into consideration a range of local factors. Despite this, there is evidence that participation in the programme has influenced the majority of participants' views on diversity

The delivery structure provided a way of managing the cohort and enabling interaction within service groups as well as between peers from other services. These mixed formats provided space for networking and exchanging experiences and provided an opportunity to interact with colleagues working at different levels and roles.

The programme content based around four leadership capabilities was well received and overall engagement with the programme was high. Despite this, many participants reported challenges to getting the most out of the programme. The most common challenges reported were: devoting time to activities amidst competing work priorities; dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic; and dealing with local work circumstances.

Incorporating a strategic challenge project addressing a real-world issue for each service was generally well received and provided a valuable means of using what was learned as the programme progressed. Some participants would have liked clearer guidance on the strategic challenge early on and some felt that it added an additional workload pressure.

Impact on Participants

Generally, participants considered that the programme had been important in contributing to many areas including: broadening perspectives on leadership; developing others; increasing self-awareness; and increasing confidence as a leader.

Comparison of participants' responses to statements between the summative and baseline evaluation surveys shows that participants felt the programme had contributed to their understanding and practice of a range of areas of leadership.

There were particularly significant positive increases in ratings for the following statements:

- 'I think of myself as a leader'
- 'I know what makes a good leader'
- 'I am confident in my own leadership skills'
- 'I possess effective leadership skills'
- 'Other people consider me to be a leader'
- 'I have the ability to make a significant impact on my workplace/environment as a leader'

For most respondents the programme had either changed or reinforced their views of the challenges of being a leader and for many the programme had contributed to changing perceptions around issues of diversity in the library sector workforce.

Over half of the summative survey respondents reported that the programme had had an impact on their career aspirations with a few participants changing roles or getting new jobs during the programme. Some participants reported frustration around limited career progression opportunities within their service or the public library sector as a whole and limited opportunities to use what they had learned on the programme in the future.

Participants enjoyed additional benefits of participating in the programme. These included: developing networks; improved working relationships with colleagues; involvement in projects; increased confidence; more self-awareness and opportunity to reflect.

The programme focussed on four key leadership capabilities: resilience; dialogue; inclusion and diversity; and innovation. Across the cohort, the programme had contributed to participants development in these areas and in most areas there was a statistically significant improvement in participants ratings between the baseline and summative surveys.

Impact on Services

Overall, many participants considered that the programme had, or would have an impact on their service. At the time of the summative evaluation survey in November 2021, over half of the survey respondents considered that the programme had already had an impact on their service. Just over one third of participants responding to the summative survey respondents indicated that they did not know if their involvement in the programme had had an impact on their service at that point with some considering it too early to assess the impact. Local circumstances also affected the extent to which the outcomes of the programme had, or would have, an impact on the service.

Examples of ways that the skills and understanding gained on the programme fed into the wider service included: supporting inclusion and diversity; improving

communication and staff development: and strengthening networks and relationships beyond the library service.

The strategic challenge was a key way in which the programme could immediately contribute to library service development. The strategic challenges addressed a range of topics including improving diversity in the workforce; understanding and improving the digital offer; engaging, involving and supporting young people; and maximising the value of the library in the community.

Many participants reported a range of positive outcomes as a result of working on their strategic challenges. This included wider impacts beyond extending to the wider service and the user community.

Case studies produced in May 2022 focussed on a selection of the participating service's strategic challenges. These provide valuable examples of the impact that this activity is having and include: improving library spaces and resources; providing volunteering and apprenticeship opportunities for young people; developing new programmes of events to engage communities; involving staff and the community in new projects; developing an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan; understanding and improving the digital offer; and understanding and evaluating events to improve the value and impact of the library service.

The case studies highlight examples of the ways in which what participants had learned on the Leading Libraries programme has fed into the delivery of the strategic challenge. This includes: putting theory into practice and providing a focus for activity; enabling staff to further develop the leadership capabilities underpinning the programme; fostering increased collaboration and cooperation and empowering staff and raising confidence.

Wider Impact

The Leading Libraries programme was designed to have a long-term impact through developing a diverse workforce with leadership skills to support the sector to respond to leadership challenges in new ways. There are a range of outputs which already show ways in which the Leading Libraries programme is having a wide impact.

The Leading Libraries programme has produced a successful model of course delivery which could be fed forward into the development of further courses.

An online learning programme has been produced focussing on the four Leading Libraries leadership capabilities and these multimedia resources are being made available to all library staff.

CILIP's Professional Knowledge and Skills Base (PKSB) and Professional Registration was promoted to participants during the final taught session as a good way to build on the experience of this programme, to encourage ongoing connection to the

wider sector, to continue to develop and formally recognise reflective practice, network-build and understand impact within their own organisations.

Inspired by the Leading Libraries programme a short version of the programme was delivered. This had a focus on participants of female and BAME backgrounds and reflects the ongoing desire of Libraries Connected and other organisations to support diversity in leadership within the library workforce.

The strategic challenge projects address real world issues that other library services may be faced with. Libraries Connected and CILIP are planning activities to showcase the outcomes of the Leading Libraries strategic Challenges in order to share approaches and lessons learned more widely within the sector.

The programme has shown how any member of library staff can display leadership regardless of role or position. It has demonstrated how leadership talent can be recognised and enabled wherever it exists in the service.

The programme has contributed to changing perceptions of leadership and inclusion and has already influenced thinking and practice within sector wide organisations such as Libraries Connected and CILIP. It is expected that through the ongoing work of participating individuals and library services these expanded perceptions of leadership will cascade further throughout each service and the sector more widely.

The programme has contributed to developing valuable leadership capabilities in members of the library workforce. This includes increasing understanding of issues around diversity, expanded networks and increased confidence to lead. It is expected that the influence of these individual participants will be felt further within their existing services and throughout the diverse paths that their careers may take.

8. Next Steps

This programme is one element of Libraries Connected leadership strategy to build a more diverse and representative public library leadership and support succession planning. Based on the experiences and lessons learned from successfully delivering the Leading Libraries programme, there are a range of opportunities for further development to be considered. These include:

- Investigating ways in which to continue the work started by the Leading Libraries programme. This could include seeking further funding to undertake a similar programme to include more library services, possibly in partnership with other parts of the sector.

- Assessing longer term impact. Further evaluation work will be undertaken in 2023 to follow up participants and discover to what extent the programme has had an impact on individuals and services over the longer term
- Transferring the proven model of course delivery and group interactions to other environments including hybrid, online and face to face delivery.

- Promoting further engagement with the online leadership modules developed through the programme which are hosted on Learning Pool and CILIP's e- learning hub.

- Exploring ways to develop clear pathways to leadership at a local, regional and national level.

- Reviewing the effectiveness and challenges of the recruitment processes for this programme, to ensure that we maximise opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to take part in future programmes, and building this into a wider programme of workforce equality and diversity practices including recruitment, support for diverse workforces and leadership.

- Sharing the lessons learned and successes from the programme. Case studies featuring participating services and the work undertaken to address their strategic challenges should be shared widely. Programme participants should be invited to share their experiences and expertise on specific topics covered by the programme, for example, supporting diversity, assessing digital offers, working with young people and demonstrating leadership in a range of ways within a library service.

- Libraries Connected continuing to promote and instil the values and ethos of leadership embodied in the Leading Libraries programme which emphasises that everyone has the potential to display leadership regardless of level and role.

Libraries Connected, CILIP and partner organisations and library services will consider how to make the most of these opportunities. Valuable work is already

underway to build on the legacy of the programme and should be continued in order to maximise the benefit of this innovative and successful programme.

Appendix. Summary of Evaluation Activities

	Surveys	Date created
1.	Leading Libraries Programme Baseline Survey	07/09/20
2.	Leading Libraries Feedback Request	06/10/20
3.	Leading Libraries – October POD Session Feedback	14/10/20
4.	Leading Libraries – November POD 2 Session Feedback	18/11/20
5.	Leading Libraries – December Network Meeting Feedback	15/12/20
6.	Leading Libraries – January POD 3 Session Feedback	12/01/21
7.	Leading Libraries Interim Feedback: Strategic Challenge	03/03/21
8.	Leading Libraries – April POD 4 Session Feedback	06/04/21
9.	Leading Libraries – Leading for Inclusion Session Feedback (May)	19/05/21
10.	Leading Libraries Baseline Self-Assessment Survey: Leadership Capabilities	14/10/20
11.	Leading Libraries – June POD 5 Session Feedback	07/06/21
12.	Cohort Co-Lab 2 July Session Feedback	02/08/21
13.	Leading Libraries Summative Evaluation Survey	04/10/21
14.	Leading Libraries Project Board Feedback	04/10/21
	Interviews and Focus Groups	
1.	4 interviews conducted with program facilitators	14/09/20
2.	6 interim interviews conducted with 6 participants	12/06/21
3.	Conducted a focus group with 4 participants	22/11/21
4.	Conducted interview with one participant	22/11/21
	Observation	
1.	Pete in attendance at the Cohort Co-Lab 2 event	15/07/21
2.	Pete in attendance at Leading Libraries Final Conference	09/03/22

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