

## Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

### Part 1 Scoping

#### 1 Details of the Proposal

<b>Title of Proposal:</b>	Community Learning and Development (CLD) Plan 2021 -24
<b>What is it?</b>	A new Policy/Strategy/Practice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A revised Policy/Strategy/Practice <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Description of the proposal:</b> (Set out a clear understanding of the purpose of the proposal being developed or reviewed (what are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes, including the context within which it will operate).	<p><b>CLD Strategic Partnership Plan for 2021-24</b>          This Plan details the key priorities for delivery and improvement of CLD by partners in Scottish Borders for the next 3 years. The Plan has been developed by CLD partners, drawing on evidence gathered from learners, community groups and CLD learning providers. <b>Note: it is a Partnership Plan, as required by legislation. It is not the Plan for how the Council will deliver its own CLD service.</b></p> <p><b>The Plan over-arching objectives are:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 To reduce inequalities in our communities through the provision of early intervention and prevention activities which are life-wide, life-long and centred on the needs and aspirations of our learners and communities.</li> <li>2 To support a CLD sector which is resilient and sustainable as it recovers from the impacts of Covid-19</li> <li>3 To develop our CLD workforce and partnership activity to increase collaboration and recognition within and between agencies and services.</li> </ol>

**The priorities for improvement across the CLD Partnership for the next three years are:**

**Improving outcomes for targeted individuals and groups in communities:**

1. Creating additional opportunities and support for learning, employability and creating local wealth.
2. Protecting and improving health and wellbeing outcomes for young people, adults and families
3. Addressing digital poverty, ensuring learners have the necessary tools, skills and support to access digital learning and services

**Improving the way we work as a Partnership:**

4. Understanding the impact of Covid-19 and Covid-19 recovery planning on the CLD sector and on the individuals and communities that are our partners in learning and development.
5. Involving learners and communities in the design, delivery, evaluation and improvement of our CLD activity; ensuring that this is meaningful and supports learning and development of individuals and communities; striving towards co-production.
6. Our Workforce will be skilled, supported, empowered to plan, delivery and evaluate quality CLD activities and interventions.

Oversight of the Plan sits with the CLD Strategic Partnership (Borders College, The Bridge, Jobcentre Plus, Live Borders, NHS Borders, Police Scotland, Scottish Borders Council, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber, Skills Development Scotland, Volunteer Centre Borders and Youth Borders).

In previous years, the 3 year CLD Plan has been informed by CLD partners, including learners and community groups, in each of 9 local learning partnerships (LCPs) organised around the catchment areas of the 9 Scottish Borders High Schools.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these LCPs have been paused. A scaled down process is being used to develop the CLD Plan, which draws on information available to the

	<p>partnership now. The Plan will contain action to gather more information in year one and use this to shape the actions in year two and three.</p> <p>The CLD Strategic Plan will be developed by members of the CLD Strategic Partnership in a three stage process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Members have noted the Scottish Government Guidance which lays out clear expectations of the themes that need to be addressed in the Plan. This has informed the priorities for 2021-24.</li> <li>2. Members and LCP Coordinators have evaluated what has been achieved in the 2018-21 Plan.</li> <li>3. Members are reviewing evidence available from learners and community groups about what their needs are for learning and development (from local, regional and national sources)</li> <li>4. Members will use all the above information to develop Partnership actions to meet the identified needs.</li> </ol>		
<p><b>Service Area:</b> <b>Department:</b></p>	<p>Community Learning and Development Children and Young People’s Services</p>		
<p><b>Lead Officer:</b> (Name and job title)</p>	<p>Oonagh McGarry CLD Team Leader (adult learning)</p>		
<p><b>Other Officers/Partners involved:</b> (List names, job titles and organisations)</p>	<p>Stephen Mitchell</p>	<p>Station Commander, Prevention and Protection, MELSB LSO Area, Fire Scotland</p>	
	<p>Chris Lau</p>	<p>Chief Executive, Volunteer Centre Borders</p>	
	<p>Lisa Denham</p>	<p>Arts Development Business Manager, Live Borders</p>	
	<p>Graham Jones</p>	<p>SBC Safer Communities</p>	
	<p>Kevin McCall</p>	<p>Senior Lead Officer, SBC</p>	

	McGarry Oonagh	SBC CLD Team Leader (adult learning)
	Juliana Amaral	Chief Executive Officer, Berwickshire Association of Voluntary Services (BAVS)
	Katharine Mathison	Director of Enterprise and Business Innovation, Borders College
	Michael Curran	Programme Manager, Business Change & Improvement, SBC
	Niven Mike	Work Coach Team Leader, DWP
	Sewell Nichola	Health Improvement Lead - Communities & Vulnerable Groups, NHS
	Tait Norrie	SBC CLD Team Leader (youth learning)
	Walker Morag	Executive Officer, The Bridge
	Susan Hunter	Chief Officer, Youth Borders
	Margaret Simpson	Director Borders Social Enterprise Chamber C.I.C.
	Andrea Hall	Area Manager - Borders and D+G, Skills Development Scotland
	Shona Smith	Communities and Partnerships Manager, SBC
<b>Date(s) IIA completed:</b>	Started 22/06/2021 Updated 25/06/2021 Updated 28/06/2021 Updated 05/08/2021 Updated 20/08/2021 Updated 09/09/2021	

Updated 13/09/2021  
Updated 15/09/2021

## 2 Will there be any cumulative impacts as a result of the relationship between this proposal and other policies?

Yes. It is envisioned that implementation of other policies such as the Scottish Borders Integrated Children and Young People's Services Plan, Community Planning Partnership Key Priorities, Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework will be enhanced by the unique CLD Partnership contributions detailed in this CLD Strategic Plan.

## 3 Legislative Requirements

### 3.1 Relevance to the Equality Duty:

Do you believe your proposal has any relevance under the Equality Act 2010?

#### Equality Duty

#### Reasoning:

**Elimination of discrimination (both direct & indirect), victimisation and harassment.** *(Will the proposal discriminate? Or help eliminate discrimination?)*

**Promotion of equality of opportunity?**  
*(Will your proposal help or hinder the Council with this)*

**Foster good relations?**  
*(Will your proposal help or hinder the council's relationships with those who have equality characteristics?)*

Yes there is relevance to all three aspects of the equality duty. Implementing the strategy will enable:

- the development of skills (including for example, literacy and numeracy) that disadvantaged people can use in employment, their community, further learning or as parents and family members to support their children in their important early years.
- Support all our young people (and in particular those who need more choices and more chances to achieve their full potential) to become confident individuals, effective contributors, responsible citizens and successful learners.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empower communities to work together to achieve lasting change in their communities.</li> </ul> <p>This should help us meet the obligations of the equality duty.</p>
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<b>3.2 Which groups of people do you think will be or potentially could be, impacted by the implementation of this proposal? (You should consider employees, clients, customers / service users, and any other relevant groups)</b>				
Please tick below as appropriate, outlining any potential impacts on the undernoted equality groups this proposal may have and how you know this.				
	Impact			Please explain the potential impacts and how you know this
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	
<b>Age</b> Older or younger people or a specific age grouping		x		Commitment to implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC )will be embedded within the CLD Plan. CLD Partners offer services to all within the Scottish Borders irrespective of age. Some learning and community opportunities may target particular age groups eg young people’s health and wellbeing, older people’s digital inclusion.
<b>Disability</b> e.g. Effects on people with mental, physical, sensory impairment, learning disability, visible/invisible, progressive or recurring		x		Commitment to implementation of UNCRC will be embedded within the CLD Plan. Increased inclusion in learning and community opportunities through an integrated approach with partners recognising specific needs of groups. Increased use of digital technology, where appropriate, to ensure inclusion in learning and community opportunities. Reduced social isolation & improved health & emotional wellbeing. CLD partners will make use of a range of relevant equipment/aids to assist learners to participate in

				learning e.g. learning materials produced in large print, using coloured overlays, assistive IT technology. Increased employability, literacy and numeracy skills.
<b>Gender Reassignment Trans/Transgender Identity</b> anybody whose gender identity or gender expression is different to the sex assigned to them at birth		x		CLD Partners offer services to all within the Scottish Borders irrespective of gender. Commitment to implementation of UNCRC will be embedded within the CLD Plan.
<b>Marriage or Civil Partnership</b> people who are married or in a civil partnership	x			CLD Partners offer services to all within the Scottish Borders irrespective of marital status.
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b> (refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to <b>maternity</b> leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, <b>protection</b> against <b>maternity</b> discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth),		x		Improved partnership working to support engagement of targeted families in learning, including a focus on early years families.  Reducing inequalities by increasing access to information and services that promote rights/entitlements and increase the uptake of related benefits and support employability.
<b>Race Groups:</b> including colour, nationality, ethnic origins, including minorities (e.g. gypsy travellers, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers)		x		Increased English language skills (ESOL). Improved community integration through participation in multi-agency activities such as Diversity week. Promotional materials are available in different formats. Commitment to implementation of UNCRC will be embedded within the CLD Plan.
<b>Religion or Belief:</b> different beliefs, customs (including atheists and those with no aligned belief)		x		CLD Partners offer services to all within the Scottish Borders regardless of their religion or belief. The learning and community activities within the CLD Plan may have a positive impact on fostering good relations. Commitment to implementation of UNCRC will be embedded within the CLD Plan

<b>Sex</b> women and men		x		Commitment to implementation of UNCRC will be embedded within the CLD Plan
<b>Sexual Orientation</b> , e.g. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Heterosexual		x		Commitment to implementation of UNCRC will be embedded within the CLD Plan. Improved partnership working should result in increased inclusion in learning and community opportunities.
<p><b>3.3 Fairer Scotland Duty</b></p> <p>This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage when making <u>strategic</u> decisions.</p> <p>The duty is set at a strategic level - these are the key, high level decisions that SBC will take. This would normally include strategy documents, decisions about setting priorities, allocating resources and commissioning services.</p>				
<p><b>Is the proposal strategic?</b></p> <p>Yes</p>				
<p><b>If yes, please indicate any potential impact on the undernoted groups this proposal may have and how you know this:</b></p>				
	<b>Impact</b>			<b>State here how you know this</b>
	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Positive Impact</b>	<b>Negative Impact</b>	
<b>Low and/or No Wealth</b> – enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.		x		The CLD Plan will target disadvantaged individuals and communities, including these socio economic elements



<b>Material Deprivation</b> – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies		x		Learning opportunities will aim to increase people’s life chances, increasing employability, potential for income generation and to build wealth within disadvantaged communities.
<b>Socio-economic Background</b> – social class i.e. parents’ education, employment and income		x		
<b>Area Deprivation</b> – where you live (e.g. rural areas), where you work (e.g. accessibility of transport)		x		The CLD Plan will target disadvantaged individuals and communities.  In year one of the Plan, activity will focus on those areas identified as most vulnerable using the SBC Covid Recovery index.
<b>Looked after and accommodated children and young people</b>		x		Commitment to implementation of UNCRC will be embedded within the CLD Plan.  Increased inclusion in learning and community opportunities through an integrated approach with partners recognising specific needs of groups.
<b>Carers</b> paid and unpaid including family members		x		Increased inclusion in learning and community opportunities, including young carers & adult carers (mental & physical health benefits).
<b>Homelessness</b>		x		Improved partnership working should lead to increased inclusion in learning and community opportunities for disadvantaged individuals.
<b>Addictions and substance use</b>		x		
<b>Those involved within the criminal justice system</b>		x		Improved partnership working should lead to increased inclusion in learning and community opportunities for disadvantaged individuals eg bespoke adult literacies learning for referrals from Criminal Justice Team.

## Part 2 Full Integrated Impact Assessment

### 5 Data and Information

What evidence has been used to inform this proposal?

The CLD Partnership has reviewed the currently available evidence from learners and communities in Scottish Borders about what learning and development is important to them (see below).

#### **CURRENT EVIDENCE BASE**

##### **Priority 1: Creating additional opportunities and support for learning, employability and creating local wealth.**

The Participation Rate in education, training or employment for 16-17yr olds is 96.1%, higher than the Scottish average of 95.7%. For Langlee and Burnfoot the rate drops below 85%. (SDS Monthly Participation Measure).

#### **Learning opportunities**

- 84% of adult learners (n=58) surveyed in Oct 2020 wanted to re-engage with learning. Learners wanted to learn about building confidence and personal development (55%), supporting mental health and dealing with emotions (50%), getting qualifications (47%), reading, writing, talking and listening (41%) child development and positive family relationships (41%), maths (29%), finding and keeping a job (24%), money, debt and budgeting (21%) (CLDS survey of adult learners Sep 2020)
- Some learners face barriers to successful learning: Borders College report that LGBT students consistently have lower success rates than those who describe themselves as heterosexual; young students (16-19yrs) are least likely to be successful across all age groups (although rates are improving year on year); students who have declared one disability are less likely to be successful. However, students declaring multiple disabilities are more likely to be successful (likely due to wrap around learning support); students declaring only mental health as a disability are less likely to be successful than those with declaring mental health issues along with one or more other disabilities.

- Youth work contributes to preventing learning loss by maintaining young people's skills, motivation and engagement with education in holiday periods. 80% of young people who participated in a 2020 pilot programme exploring youth work, food insecurity and learning loss were "looking forward to returning to school; whilst 96% has learned how to work with others; to be more confident (94%); learned how to ask for help (87%) "

## **Employability**

### **Rurality:**

- 100 Department of Work and Pensions customers stated that lack of public transport had prevented them from applying or taking up a job. (34%) (Travel Survey of Universal Credit Customers in the Scottish Borders, DWP 2020)
- Young people who participated in SBC's Transport Consultation identified that accessing part time jobs in other areas is difficult due to the routes of local bus services and roads being too dangerous to cycle. Their highest priority in a bus service is price followed by more regular services.
- The percentage of employed people in remote rural areas who have a second job (8%) is more than double that of employed people in in the rest of Scotland (3%). A higher proportion of employed people in rural areas are 'homeworkers' compared to the rest of Scotland. This is the case for both women and men. (Rural Scotland Key Facts 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot))

### **Employment Deprivation:**

- TD1 and TD9 postcodes had the highest number of claimants aged 16-24yrs in May 2021, 199 and 222 respectively (Scottish Borders Claimant Distribution)
- Langlee and Burnfoot were the two intermediate zones with the highest number of people of working age identified as employment deprived in 2018 (Picture of Poverty 2021)

### **Impact of Covid-19:**

- Across all age groups the Scottish Borders had a higher change in count of Out-of-Work claimants compared to Scotland Dec 2019- Dec 20  
Source: NOMIS/ONS

- In December 2020, the Scottish Borders had a higher proportion of population aged 18-24 claiming Out-of-Work benefits compared to Scotland.
- Between December 2019 and December 2020 there was a 112% increase in the number of women claiming Out-of-Work benefits in the Scottish Borders, higher than the increase for men in the Scottish Borders (88%) and for both men (86%) and women (88%) in Scotland.

The Regional Skills Assessment for the Scottish Borders (Skills Development Scotland, July 2021) reported:

- The number of Universal Credit claimants in the Scottish Borders continued to increase by 9% (700) from 7,900 in May 2020 to 8,600 in May 2021.
- 3,300 jobs furloughed in the Scottish Borders (May 2021), accounting for 1.7% of Scotland's furloughed workforce.
- The SDS's Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) aims to help minimise the impact for people and businesses facing redundancy. During 2020/21 PACE has engaged with 881 individuals and 19 employers, an increase of 395% and 58% on 2019/20.

Four intermediate zones are identified as having higher numbers of employees in Covid-19 vulnerable industries (2018): Chirnside and area, Cheviot East, Cheviot West and Hawick North. ([Picture of Poverty 2021](#)).

### **Creating local wealth**

Low wages:

- The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings produced by ONS and published on NOMIS contains information on wages. The median gross weekly pay (workplace based) for full time workers in the Scottish Borders has consistently been below the level for Scotland (83% between 2002 and 2020).

Income deprivation:

- Langlee and Burnfoot were the most income deprived intermediate zones in in Scottish Borders in 2018 ([Picture of Poverty 2021](#))

### **Volunteering:**

- Volunteering participation in Scotland has increased by 26% due to COVID-19 (from 48% to 74%). Befriending (68%), food shopping (57%) and helping with household tasks (30%) have the highest volunteering participation. Compared to the Scottish Household Survey 2018 data, all types of volunteering are expected to be higher after the COVID-19 crisis is over. ([Volunteer Scotland, July 2020](#))

### **Right-based practice**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Child affords children and young people the right to access education to the highest level possible and learning experiences which further develop their mind, body and talents – youth work and informal learning is recognised as a key contributor to the education of young people to reach their full potential. All children and young people have the right to an adequate standard of living (article 27) and to benefit from social security (article 26) – our CLD activity should seek to maximise income, deliver free and inclusive opportunities, and further develop our local economies and community wealth.

### **What this data tells us:**

Partnership actions need to address inequalities by targeting those individuals and communities facing multiple disadvantage.

When designing learning opportunities, these must be “clearly based on identified learner needs, priorities and aspirations....informed and developed in discussion with learners and communities....opportunities for achievement and progression are well planned and integral to the learning offer” (How Good is Our Community Learning and Development 4)

To develop employability, learning opportunities must be aligned to evidenced local priorities. Educational guidance will support learners to make informed choices that meet their individual needs, ranging from developing broader meta-skills (for those further from the job market) through to practical skills such as driving a tractor or Moving and Handling (for those who are job ready). Learning pathways will be clear, offer flexible routes to achievement and support learners to progress towards longer term careers in growth sectors. Partnership working will support an aspirational culture for young people and their families and encourage thinking differently about working in growth sectors, including yet to be created opportunities in the green economy.

### **Priority 2: Protecting and improving health and wellbeing outcomes for young people, adults and families**

The Marmot Report<sup>1</sup> outlines that socio-economic factors (e.g., education, employment, and income) contribute to our health more than individual health behaviours. However, ill-health and premature death disproportionately affects people living in poorer areas, e.g., the rate of mental ill-health and coronary heart disease are higher in more deprived areas in Scotland and people in those areas are more likely to be admitted to hospital with alcohol and/or drug problems compared to the least deprived areas.

### **Health Inequalities:**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review>

The Scottish Government's Chief Statistician has published the Scottish Health Survey 2019, providing information on the health, and factors relating to health, of adults and children in Scotland. This includes the first estimate of the national prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in adults - in 2019, 15% of adults reported having experienced four or more ACEs and those in the most deprived areas were almost twice as likely as those in the least deprived areas to have experienced four or more ACEs. Volunteering can improve individual physical and mental health and well-being. We know that volunteering strengthens social networks and bonds within and between communities and can help to create experiences and connections that lead to better lives. (Volunteering, Health & Wellbeing, Volunteer Scotland, Dec 2018). Making it Easy – a Health Literacy Plan for Scotland (2014) set out the ambition for Scotland to be a health-literate society that enables all of us to have the confidence, knowledge, understanding and skills to maintain good health.

### **Impact of Covid-19:**

Demographic breakdown of young people's views about long-term impacts of COVID-19 on their lives:

When asked if their educational establishment had reopened in a safe way, young people in more affluent areas agreed with this statement more than those in other areas. Young people aged 11 & 12 were most concerned about missing out on learning or having difficulty with online learning. Respondents over 18 also mostly expressed difficulty with learning online, with much more responses for this theme compared to others. Male respondents were substantially more likely to agree that they felt good about their mental health & wellbeing (59%) than female respondents (34%) and respondents who identified as non-binary or in a different way (18%). When asked for any further thoughts on employment, young people who had a long-term illness or disability expressed concern about job security in their industry and the inability/difficulty to find a job slightly more than the other group. Young carers were less likely to agree that they had a good relationship with their family than others (74% of respondents who were young carers compared with 84% who were not. When asked if they were happy to be back to learning in person, BAME respondents were less likely to agree than White respondents. <https://youngscot.net/news-database/demographic-breakdown-lockdownlowdown>

### **Covid-19 inequalities:**

Covid-19 disproportionately affects certain groups BUT within 2 years and 4 months, **more people will die from avoidable causes: suicide, drugs and inequalities** than would die from an **unmitigated** Covid pandemic. This is the equivalent of 4 unmitigated Covid pandemics in 10 years (McCartney et al (2020), Scaling COVID-19 against inequalities: should the policy response consistently match the mortality challenge?). People experience healthcare differently and in Scottish Borders the most vulnerable groups have been most affected by Covid. Universal Credit cases in the Borders have increased from 3,731 in October 19 to 7,899 in October 20 which is an increase of 112%. Even though some of the increases are due to migration from other benefits, it does reflect an increasing number of people relying on benefits. Crisis Grant awards have increased from £47,914 in November 2019 to £76,585 in November 2020. An increase of 37%. Free school meal awards have increased from 1,659 in September 2019 to 2,075 in September 2020 which is an increase of 20%.

Six intermediate zones in Scottish Borders are identified in the most vulnerable quintile for Covid-19 Recovery for overall health reasons: Coldstream and area, Kelso South, Langlee, Burnfoot, Hawick Central, Hawick West End. ([Picture of Poverty 2021](#))

**Mental Health and wellbeing is important to individuals in the Borders:**

**Older People's experiences of lockdown: 487** people over 60yrs responded to a survey by the Borders Older People's partnership. Of these, over 80% reported lockdown affected their **social activity negatively**; 54% reported a **negative effect on their mental health and emotional wellbeing**. The most important things now are: staying safe and having the confidence and support to get back out to activities and see family and friends (52%); having access to buildings and services again (35%) [[Understanding Older People's Experience of Lockdown Dec 2020](#)]

**Adult learners:**

55% of adult learners (n=58) surveyed said they want to learn about building confidence and personal development; 50% want to learn about supporting mental health and dealing with emotions ([CLDS survey of adult learners Sep 2020](#)).

**Supporting men's mental health provides particular challenges:**

The recent survey of men's mental health in Scottish Borders found that men were more likely to be engaged in activities which maintained their physical and mental health eg sleeping 6-9hrs, being physically active and eating a balanced diet. Men were less likely to report being engaged with "Be aware", "Belong" or "Enjoy and learn" statements eg being involved in group activities, volunteering to help others. Men wanted to be involved in learning and developing ways to self-manage symptoms and understanding of mental health conditions ([Hearing the Voices of Men, 2021](#))

**Eyemouth Whole Systems Approach** is one of five early adopter areas in Scotland who are using systems thinking to engage community stakeholders in type 2 diabetes prevention planning. The main aim of this work is to increase healthy weight across the local population with a focus on children and health inequalities through the development of a community led plan. Community stakeholders have identified communications, outdoor activities and family participation and learning as their top priorities

**Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Services and Supports Framework** is being implemented in the Scottish Borders. This framework is informed by the needs of young people for responsive, flexible and adaptive community services and supports. Mental health and wellbeing is one of four priorities of our regional Children and Young People's Services plan. Our Partnership will be guided by the findings of this review and will work in partnership with the Children and Young People's Leadership Group to ensure that youth work plays a pivotal role in prevention, early intervention and specialist service provision.

**Rights based practice:**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child affords every child the right to the best possible health (article 24). This right says that children and young people have the right to be both physically and mentally fulfilled. Children and young people also have a right to information about their health. Youth work can be a key provider of activities and information which promotes and supports emotional wellbeing and provides young people with access to trusted and reliable information. A 2018 study of youth work<sup>2</sup> in Scotland found evidence that a high quality informal, voluntary, youth-adult (youth worker) relationship is consistently associated with improvement in adolescent health, academic performance and wider positive development, with trusted adult relationships being explicitly identified by youth as a contributory factor.

### **What this data tells us:**

Inequalities make a huge difference to health outcomes for individuals and communities. CLD partners need to have a shared understanding of health inequalities, and their impact, across the Borders and use this knowledge to underpin planning all our Partnership CLD activity.

### **Priority 3: Addressing digital poverty, ensuring learners have the necessary tools, skills and support to access digital learning and services**

Digital literacy has become an essential skill for all in terms of engagement with Scottish Government services, broader citizenship engagement and employment. In addition, the pandemic has highlighted the limited access many people in the most deprived communities have to ICT equipment and connectivity. Addressing digital poverty will be key to building back better. CLD Standards Council Scotland Engage, Educate, Connect, Empower: CLD, Resilience and Recovery July 2020)

### **There is a need to develop skills:**

- 65% of shielding/clinically vulnerable recipients (n =48) of a digital device through the Connecting Scotland Digital Inclusion programme in 2020/21 classed their skill level as beginner; 54% of older people/disabled recipients (n=80) classed their skill level as low.
- 28% of adult learners (n=58) surveyed said that learning basic computer skills was a priority for them; 16% said learning to use the internet was a priority (CLDS survey of adult learners Sep 2020).

### **There is a need to improve connectivity:**

- 81.3% of households have home internet access in the Scottish Borders compared to 85% for Scotland in 2018 ([Picture of Poverty 2021](#)) Anecdotally we know that **affordability** is a barrier, particularly amongst more vulnerable individuals:

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<sup>2</sup> [impact-of-community-based-universal-youth-work-in-scotland-november-2018.pdf \(youthlinkscotland.org\)](#)



Scottish Borders Council's Throughcare and Aftercare Team identified 50 young people leaving care requiring a digital device and connectivity through the Connecting Scotland programme. *"We are aware of many of these young people going without food and utilities to be in a position to afford devices and connection at present, so their inclusion in this programme would assist them greatly".*

Subscription services add costs to monthly household bills. Digital devices are not always suitable to access services eg parents on the Parental Employability Support programme are trying to use mobile phones to apply for jobs and to study online.

**Inclusion:**

Feedback from CLD providers is highlighting issues around the need for access to multiple devices in households, mitigating risks of dominant individuals controlling access and breaching confidentiality. Adaptive technology needs to be widely understood and available to ensure inclusive use. CLD practitioners need to be knowledgeable and confident to use digital technology to deliver services effectively, whilst managing the balance of risk and safety to all involved. Eildon Housing is piloting community Wi-Fi within its supported housing services due to Wi-Fi being considered essential utility for households. The scheme is to be rolled out further in 2021/22. 72% of Village Halls surveyed have no broadband or internet access ([The Bridge Village Hall survey](#))

**Organisation Capacity: Digital and Cyber Security:**

There is a need to improve IT infrastructure and data security for organisations. Covid-19 has increase organisational reliance and necessity for digital working. It is important to our Partnership that CLD organisations have the necessary support to be "cyber aware". This requires the building of knowledge, capacity, skills, expertise and resources within organisations or through local networks to exchange experience and develop good and positive practice for organisations of all sizes.

70% of Village Hall respondents reported that they were very/extremely familiar in using digital technology. 29% of community organisations surveyed were seeking advice and support to make better use of digital technology ([The Bridge Community Organisations Survey](#)).

**Rights-based Practice:**

The UNCRC affords every child has the right to access information from the media (article 17), and the right to privacy (article 16). As we expand digital service provision and take action to promote digital inclusion, we must also be mindful of the rights of children and young people which extend in to online spaces. This includes keeping children and young people safe from harm. The Partnership will work to develop

understanding of young people's digital rights<sup>3</sup>: the right to remove; right to know; right to safety and support; right to informed and conscious use; and right to digital literacy.

### **What this data tells us:**

Digital technology can make communication and access to professional learning easier for paid and volunteer staff in CLD. We know that there is work to be done to continue to upskill staff and to harmonise systems. The South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) CLD Network has identified digital learning as one of the priorities for workforce development across the Network. Digital technology can extend the reach of learning to individuals who previously couldn't access learning. We know that online learning is not the answer for everyone. 34% of adult learners said they would not like to take part in learning online ([CLDS survey of adult learners Sep 2020](#)). This is supported by CLD Managers Scotland members who recommend blended learning, based on learner needs, as the way forward ([CLD Managers Scotland survey Aug 2020](#)). Borders College hub and spoke model is facilitating digital learning in rural areas.

### **Priority 4: Understanding the impact of Covid-19 and Covid-19 recovery planning on the CLD sector and on the individuals and communities that are our partners in learning and development.**

#### **Impact of Covid-19 on individuals in Scottish Borders:**

A range of local surveys has been conducted which confirm the negative impact of Covid-19, particularly on those individuals who were disadvantaged prior to the onset of the pandemic. Data has been shared with the Partnership that detail impacts on individuals (see improvement priorities 1 – 3 above). The data relates to: adult learners ([CLDS survey of adult learners Sep 2020](#)), older people ([Understanding Older People's Experience of Lockdown Dec 2020](#)), men's mental health ([Hearing the Voices of Men, 2021](#)), [Regional Skills Assessment](#), Covid-19 Vulnerability Index ([Picture of Poverty in the Scottish Borders 2021](#)), data from implementation of the Connecting Scotland Digital Inclusion programme.

The [Social Renewal Advisory Board Listening Event](#) gathered feedback from 12 young people about their experiences during the first lockdown. Experiences were mixed, with some young people enjoying being at home, going for walks, having time with family and speaking to neighbours. For others lack of opportunities, missing friends, poor/no wifi, lack of money and uncertainty about the future characterised the period. Rowland's (Selkirk) a community based youth work organisation conducted a survey with 47 young people - the majority of young people were concerned or slightly concerned about their own physical or mental health four weeks into the Covid-19 lockdown. Many were

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<sup>3</sup> [Your 5Rights | Digital Rights | Young Scot](#)

worried about employment and the likelihood of them being able to get a job as well as the worries of parents losing their jobs and what this would mean for their family overall.

The CLD service's adult learning team report that the majority of learners they have contact with still need support rather than learning and this is confirmed by a drastic fall in the number of adults engaged in learning programmes 2020/21 (60% on 2019/20 and 70% on 2018/19 -last full year).

Anecdotally, through Community Assistance Hubs, organisations report the negative impact on people with disabilities, unpaid carers, older people, young people, people who are socially isolated, seeking, on low income, facing mental health issues, facing barriers such as literacy, language, digital exclusion, domestic abuse.

### **Impact of Covid-19 on communities in Scottish Borders:**

A range of local surveys has been carried out which confirm the impact of Covid-19. Organisations adapted and changed the way they delivered services, with some finding this easier than others. Third Sector organisations were (and continue to be) supported to adapt and change by umbrella organisations including The Bridge, Berwickshire Association of Voluntary services, Scottish Borders Social Enterprise Chamber, YouthBorders. Staffing and resourcing continues to be challenging across all sectors as businesses and services continue to provide emergency support and plan for / implement Covid recovery. A clear message is emerging about the need for safe access to community venues and social activities. This will require organisations to continue to adapt to meeting uncertain and rapidly changing needs.

Data has been shared with the Partnership that detail impacts on communities, including:

- 132 community organisations responded to a Covid-19 survey issued by The Bridge. The major concerns about the future were continued cancellation of bookings and events (74%) and ongoing closure of recreation and leisure facilities (53%). 41% of organisations were looking for funding to cover loss of income, 38% general advice and 29% advice and support to make better use of technology. The survey indicated a level of resilience in the sector: 50% of organisations had the capacity to respond to Covid-19 and 45% indicated they will suffer significantly but will likely succeed. However 8% indicated they may need to close for good.
- 65 Village Halls responded to a Covid-19 survey from The Bridge. The majority (84%) are run entirely by volunteers and were meeting the challenge of installing Covid-19 cleaning stations at entrances (73%), aware of Test and protect data collection duties (80%) and adapting Hall Hire agreements (57%). Many face challenges such as no broadband or internet access (72%) and no recreational land/garden or outdoor space to offer community groups (50%).
- 84 community organisations responded to a Covid-19 digital survey issued by the Bridge. 80% were already using some digital technology, although 62% wanted to explore digital solutions for delivering their services differently. Just under half were seeking additional resources/support on new ways of working using digital solutions, with the most common ask being information and training on options.

- The Social Renewal Advisory Board Listening Event report from Scottish Borders recognised the tremendous local community volunteer effort and the positive partnership working that had resulted between volunteer groups and statutory services during the first lockdown. The report also reflected the challenges being faced by unpaid carers at the time.
- Youth Borders experience a growth in membership as community-based youth organisation sought peer support and networking opportunities in unprecedented times.

### **Rights-based Practice:**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child affords every child the right that adults should think about the best interests of children and young people when making choices which affect them (article 3). This is particularly important as decisions are made and resources allocated at all levels and by all partners in Covid-19 recovery. The interests of children and young people should be respected at all levels of society. Covid-19 has had detrimental impact on childhood, children and young people's education, play, health, standard of living, and family life. The Observatory of Children's Human Rights Scotland conducted an independent Children's Rights Impact Assessment on the response to Covid-19 in Scotland. Our Partnership along with the Children & Young Peoples Leadership Group (CYPLG) should advocate for the use of Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments and Equality Impact Assessments in Covid-19 recovery planning.

### **What this data tells us:**

The Partnership needs to map fully what local data is available about the impact of Covid-19 on disadvantaged individuals and communities, identify gaps and analyse what the collated data tells us about the need for CLD.

### **Priority 5: Involving learners and communities in the design, delivery, evaluation and improvement of our CLD activity; ensuring that this is meaningful and supports learning and development of individuals and communities; striving towards co-production**

The Social Renewal Advisory Report (January 2021) contained 20 recommendations, aiming to renew Scotland as we start to emerge from the pandemic. Communities and Collective Endeavour is one of three guiding principles in the report "We believe that we need to work together to deliver a fairer society and we need to give more power to people and communities and empower frontline teams."

During 2020/21, disadvantaged communities were among those most affected by the pandemic. The experience of the Community and Partnerships Team (SBC) was that communities across the Borders focussed their resources on supporting the vulnerable in their towns and villages rather than community led activities such as asset transfer and participation requests. In 2019 SBC commissioned the Scottish

Community Development Centre (SCDC) to undertake a review of the Area Partnership and Community Fund processes. The final report included recommendations to strengthen implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Many organisations and services are involving service users in design, delivery, evaluation and improvement. Learning from these processes is not effectively and consistently shared. Planning for consultations across Borders (and beyond) is fragmented, resulting in some individuals, groups and practitioners suffering from consultation fatigue and a failure to engage effectively with people considered by some as “hard to reach”. Models such as the national Children in Scotland ‘evidence bank’ should be promoted and contributed to by organisations in the Scottish Borders.

We aspire to the good practice illustrated in How Good is Our Community Learning and Development 4: 2.1 Empowered Communities *“Public services are increasingly working with community organisations to identify and agree shared priorities, making budget decisions and co-design and deliver services. Community representatives are valued as equal partners at all levels of community and locality planning. As a result, community planning is increasingly able to identify and address key priorities.”* 4.2 Delivery of community learning CLD *“provision is informed and developed in discussion with learners and communities. Learners are actively involved in shaping both their own and the wider learning offer. This ensures provision continues to meet the changing needs of learners and communities and results in clearly demonstrable and positive changes.”*

#### **Rights-based Practice:**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child affords every child the right to be listened to and taken seriously (article 12). The views and opinions of children and young people should be considered when people make decisions which involve them. It is also crucial that children and young people are given the information they need to make informed choices and good decisions. Youth workers can play a key role in the provision of information, advocacy, and facilitation for decision making. Our Partnership will advocate for increased understanding of the national standards for community engagement and ensure that these are interpreted to include the engagement of children and young people of all ages and their evolving capacity to express their view.

#### **What this data tells us:**

There is a need to share learning and intelligence and to use this to better plan how learners and communities are involved and engaged.

**Priority 6: Our Workforce will be skilled, supported, empowered to plan, delivery and evaluate quality CLD activities and interventions**

The experience of learners is shaped by the skills, knowledge and competence of the workforce facilitating and enabling CLD activity. It is therefore essential that we have a clear pathway in to our sector (such as grow your own youth workers), that our workforce is valued and supported, and that we invest in training and development. The CLD Standards Council recommends that members engage in the equivalent number of learning hours per year as they work in one week. E.g. for a full time member of staff employed 35 hours per week, they would engage in 35 professional learning and development hours each year. We therefore need to ensure that we have locally available, high quality, flexible learning opportunities for our workforce which support our plan and the needs of our learners and communities. We are also ambitious to balance knowledge based thematic learning alongside opportunities for skills and practice development through networking, evaluation for improvement, student placement/supervision, professional dialogue and reading, and supporting sector specific qualifications at all levels.

**Describe any gaps in the available evidence,-then record this within the improvement plan together with all of the actions you are taking in relation to this** (e.g. new research, further analysis, and when this is planned)

It has not been possible to engage fully with communities and learners due to Covid-19 restrictions and pressure. In year one of the Plan (Sep 2021- Aug 2022) the Partnership will undertake a comprehensive review of impact of Covid on disadvantaged individuals and communities. Priorities and action in years two and three will be amended as a result of analysis of the data gathered and reviewed.

## **6 Consultation and Involvement**

**Which groups are involved in this process and describe their involvement**

The CLD Partnership will form a working group to review the available evidence, identify gaps and plan how to address these gaps in knowledge in year one of the Plan. A range of individuals and community groups will be involved in shaping the priorities for CLD in years two and three of the Plan.

**Describe any planned involvement saying when this will take place and who is responsible for managing the process**

A working group of the CLD Partnership will oversee this process during Sep 2021 – Aug 2022

**Describe the results of any involvement and how you have taken this into account.**

A survey of adult learners with the CLD service in 2020 indicated that increasing opportunities for learning and employability (priority 1) and mental health (priority 2) were key issues.

A survey of Older People indicated that opportunities to connect with other people (priorities 2 and 4) were important to them.

Other evidence gathered from local and national surveys has informed the priorities and actions to be taken in year one of the Plan.

**What have you learned from the evidence you have and the involvement undertaken? Does the initial assessment remain valid? What new (if any) impacts have become evident?**

The CLD partnership believes that the available evidence confirms that the improvement priorities and actions described in the Plan will have a positive impact on most of the equalities groups (with the exception of marriage/civil partnership) and will reduce socio-economic disadvantage.

## 7 Mitigating Actions and Recommendations

Consider whether:

Could you modify the proposal to eliminate discrimination or reduce any identified negative impacts?  
(If necessary, consider other ways in which you could meet the aims and objectives of the proposal.)

Could you modify the proposal to increase equality and, if relevant, reduce poverty and socioeconomic disadvantage?

Describe any modifications which you can make without further delay (e.g. easy, few resource implications)

<b>Mitigation</b> Please summarise all mitigations for approval by the decision makers who will approve your proposal			
<b>Equality Characteristic/Socio economic factor</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Resource Implications (financial, people, health, property etc)</b>	<b>Approved Yes/No</b>
All	The CLD Partnership will review evidence in year one and will take steps to address any gaps in years two/three.	The Plan will be implemented using existing partner resources	<b>Yes</b>

## 8 Recommendation and Reasoning - Implement proposal with no amendments.

**Reason for recommendation:**

The CLD Partnership believes that the improvement priorities and actions in the CLD Plan 2021-24 will achieve the key aim:

To reduce inequalities in our communities through the provision of early intervention and prevention activities which are life-wide, life-long and centred on the needs and aspirations of our learners and communities.



<b>Signed by Lead Officer:</b>	Oonagh McGarry
<b>Designation:</b>	CLD Team Leader (adult learning)
<b>Date:</b>	20.8.2021
<b>Counter Signature (Director):</b> <b>Director, Young People Engagement &amp; Inclusion</b>	Lesley Munro
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> September 2021