

MEAM

Reviewing the impact of
support to the MEAM
Approach network, 2022-24

March 2024

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1 Summary of findings

- Local areas continue to benefit in multiple ways from being part of the MEAM Approach network and accessing direct support from MEAM.
- MEAM has adapted its support during 2022-24 to enable a diversification of its offer to local areas. During this period, it has provided bespoke support to some MEAM Approach areas, while continuing to provide a universal offer to all network areas via grant-funding. A commercial offer is also available to all areas, including those not in the network.
- The bespoke support offer has been based on common approaches and activities, such as one-to-one support from a Partnerships Manager, facilitated workshops and events, training and workforce development, and co-production support, and is tailored to local needs. Local areas receiving bespoke support emphasised its benefits, highlighting the value of one-to-one input, training, and general encouragement to maintain or increase their focus on systems change.
- The universal offer consists mainly of network activities such as facilitated forums and the provision of resources. Local areas report a great deal of value in being part of the MEAM Approach network, particularly its potential for sharing learning, the emotional support from peers, and support from its evidence base and national reputation.
- Local areas were keen to continue improving peer connections, network participation and involvement and had some suggestions around options for this, such as potential ways to improve participation in the online Mighty Networks platform.

2 Introduction

This report summarises the findings of research conducted by Cordis Bright in November and December 2023, which examined the support offer provided by MEAM during 2022-24 to local areas in the MEAM Approach network. The research involved:

- Review of documentation/monitoring data on MEAM activities delivered in 2022-24.
- Workshop with the MEAM team to map support activities and inter-relationships.
- Qualitative interviews with 10 local leads in MEAM Approach network areas. We spoke to a sample of local areas for this research, which were at different stages in their journey with MEAM and who were accessing different elements of the support offer (see Appendix for a full list of the areas interviewed).

The Cordis Bright research team included: Hannah Nickson, Project Director; Eleanor Southern-Wilkins, Project Manager; Samyukta Srinivasan, Researcher; and Mero Hassan, Expert by Experience Researcher.

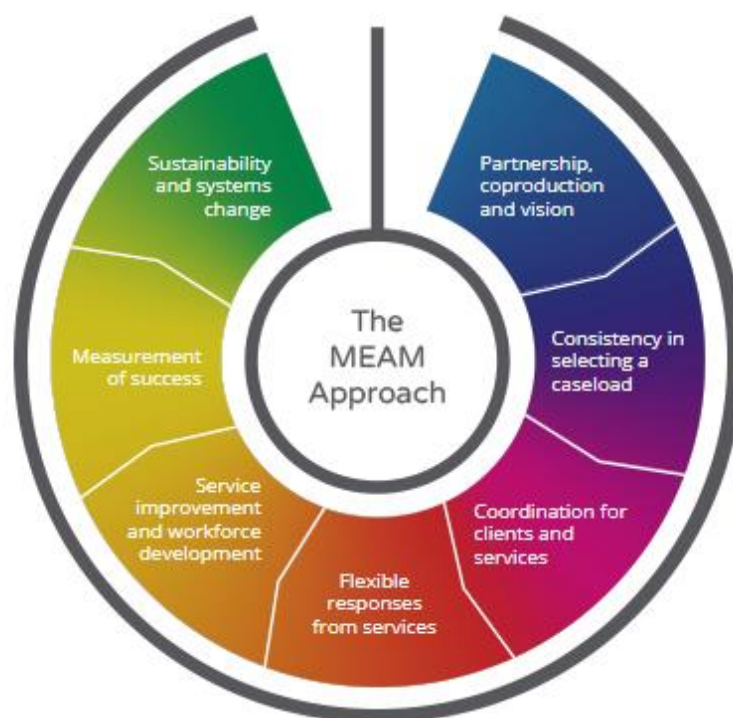
Thank you to the MEAM team and local areas for their participation in workshops and interviews, and their advice in shaping the findings and report.

3 Overview of the MEAM Approach

The MEAM Approach is a non-prescriptive framework developed in 2012 by Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM), a coalition of the national charities Clinks, Collective Voice, Homeless Link and Mind. Its purpose is to help local areas to design and deliver better coordinated services for people experiencing multiple disadvantage – defined as a combination of homelessness, substance misuse, mental ill health, and contact with the criminal justice system. It aims to increase wellbeing, reduce costs to public services and improve people’s lives.

The MEAM Approach is currently being used by partnerships of statutory and voluntary agencies in 42 local areas across England. These local areas consider seven principles (Figure 1), which they adapt to local needs and circumstances. MEAM provides support to the local partnerships as part of this process.

Figure 1: Seven elements of the MEAM Approach



Source: [The MEAM Approach website](#)

Cordis Bright previously conducted the five-year evaluation of the MEAM Approach from 2017-2022 (see [MEAM Approach evaluation final report, Oct 2022](#)), alongside other evaluation work (for example see [Impact of MEAM support, Nov 2021](#)) Reports are available on the MEAM [website](#).

4 MEAM's support offer 2022-2024

During the period 2022-2024, MEAM offered support to MEAM Approach network areas via three different pathways:

- Universal offer (grant-funded for all areas in the network).
- Bespoke offer (grant-funded for some areas in the network).
- Commercial offer (available for purchase by any area – including those not in the network).

The universal offer consists mainly of network activities such as facilitated forums and the provision of resources. The bespoke support packages and commercial support elements are based on common approaches and activities, such as one-to-one support from a Partnerships Manager, facilitated workshops and events, training and workforce development, and co-production support. The emphasis and specific activities are tailored to local needs, priorities and contexts.

This represents a change from the previous support offer structure (2017-2022), where all areas in the network received one-to-one support via a regionally-based Partnerships Manager with a regional cohort of areas to support. The change in support model was implemented to increase the range of ways in which local areas could engage with MEAM support and in recognition of the significant costs of running a full regional team.

4.1 Bespoke support packages

During 2022-24, MEAM offered three bespoke support packages to: 1) new joiner areas, 2) areas receiving funded System Intervention support, and 3) Changing Futures areas. (Note that not all these offers were available over the full two-year period).

Areas receiving bespoke support **worked with their designated MEAM staff member to identify what was needed**. Bespoke support was then provided or facilitated via this staff member (in a similar way to the previous partnership manager role). Although the precise detail of these three support packages varied (see below) they all had the following similarities:

- In all cases, this support included **direct, personalised work** (often one-to-one) delivered by a MEAM staff member. In our consultation with local areas, this was highlighted as extremely valuable in helping areas to work more effectively and to improve the local system for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.
- MEAM staff also provided **support with accessing wider network benefits and the universal support offer**. MEAM team members linked up areas who would benefit from the connection, both in a structured way, for example, encouraging new areas to join a specific 'new areas peer network', and on an

informal basis. They also helped to promote networking events to local leads (both network-wide and between individual areas) and delivered training at network or sub-network levels.

Details of the three bespoke support packages are laid out below.

4.1.1 New joiner support

- Areas which were new to the MEAM Approach network in 2022 received a package of funded support over two years to set them up as a MEAM Approach area. These areas were often at an earlier point in their journey to improve services and systems with and for people experiencing multiple disadvantage than longer-term network members.
- Support was bespoke and included one-to-one critical friend support from the start, i.e. MEAM worked with the area to identify and provide what was most helpful. This included regular check-ins with their assigned MEAM member to discuss the MEAM Approach and to plan support for local activity.
- Further support evolved over time and included: Foundation training, support and facilitation of specific operational and strategic work that local areas were developing as part of the MEAM Approach, support to help the areas to engage with wider network activities (including the online Mighty Networks community), support drafting vision/mission and strategy, and activity to link new areas with each other in a 'new areas peer network'.

4.1.2 System Intervention and leadership support

- Areas receiving System Intervention support received a package of grant-funded support focusing on systems change for one year. Local areas had to apply specifically for this support and identify an issue within their local system that they wanted to focus on as part of the support.
- The Systems Intervention support was bespoke and delivered by members of the Systems Practice Team. The team used the MEAM Systems Intervention Tool to shape the work, supporting areas to **build** partnerships, **explore** the problem from a range of perspectives, **act** in the system, and **learn** from the results. Examples from the work include: the development of local learning systems; a systemic review of begging and street activity; the development of a local trauma-informed network; support focusing on increasing work with people with lived experience; and broader support to build a strategic, systemic way of working.
- Delivery of the support included facilitated workshops and events alongside training, coaching and action-learning focused on skills development, tools and approaches for current and future systems work. For example, the team developed and ran a successful eight-month systems leadership programme and delivered this under grant-funded and commercial arrangements.

4.1.3 Changing Futures areas support

- Changing Futures (CF) areas received focused support from MEAM since MEAM took over the Changing Futures support contract in June 2023; previously, the majority of these areas were general members of the MEAM Approach network.
- Support provided to the Changing Futures areas is bespoke and set out in an agreed support plan based on local areas' needs. Support is provided through personalised one-to-one engagement from a MEAM staff member and covers a wide range of activities. Areas are also invited to a range of sessions exclusively for Changing Futures areas including regional events and the System Change Together Forum (SCTF).

4.2 Universal support activities

During 2022-24, MEAM continued to offer universal network support activities to all areas within the MEAM Approach network. This support included: access to a named MEAM contact for check-in; network events and spaces, including frontline worker and strategic leads meetings; Foundation training; an online community platform, Mighty Networks; and the MEAM newsletter.

Universal support did not include access to proactive, regular one-to-one contact with a MEAM Partnerships Manager, which meant these areas tended to have much less frequent personal contact with MEAM, although some were still active in the network. This engagement tended to happen via:

- **Network events and spaces.** These were highly praised as ways of sharing learning and building a sense of community. Local areas expressed a wish for more in-person networking, which could enable more specific, personal conversations. Network events were also valued as a way of hearing directly from MEAM on topics relating to multiple disadvantage.
- **Areas reaching out directly to one another.** Local areas working on a specific topic of focus could seek out other network areas doing similar work and create opportunities to work with and learn from each other. This was not happening across all areas but those who had experienced it found it highly beneficial. This was especially true for newer/low maturity areas.

4.3 Commercially-available support

During 2022-2024, MEAM sought to significantly increase the range of support that could be commissioned directly from MEAM by MEAM Approach areas and local areas outside the network. The commercial offer included several support elements which were also found in one of more of the grant-funded support packages described above, such as: systems intervention support; systems leadership support and training; co-production support; in-depth training and workforce development on a range of topics; and learning support. Areas could mix and match different support elements to create a package tailored to their local needs and priorities.

5 Impact of the bespoke support packages

Local areas receiving bespoke support packages emphasised the benefits of the support offer and the MEAM way of working. As in [previous evaluations](#), they highlighted that MEAM support was tailored to their local needs and had a positive impact on their ability to improve local services and systems for people experiencing multiple disadvantage. Local areas especially valued the one-to-one input from their named MEAM team member, the training, and the activities or encouragement to maintain or increase their focus on systems approaches and change.

5.1 Bespoke support allowed resource to be targeted to areas which benefitted most

The MEAM team is relatively small and was therefore working during 2022-2024 within limited resources to provide bespoke support to local areas. The bespoke support packages enabled MEAM to target specific support activities to areas which were most likely to benefit from them.

For example, the new joiner package enabled MEAM to recruit areas to the network who were newer to work to improve services and systems for people experiencing multiple disadvantage. MEAM could then deliver a package to these areas which:

- Supported their engagement with the MEAM team and network activities.
- Increased local understanding of the MEAM Approach and effective ways to improve services and systems for people experiencing multiple disadvantage.
- Helped areas to progress in the early stages of their operational and strategic work to develop and deliver better services and systems.

Similarly, the Systems Intervention support package was targeted to areas with high interest in tackling a specific issue and moving forward their work on systems approaches and change. These local areas were not new to general work around multiple disadvantage, but were seeking to tackle specific system-level challenges or unlock local potential to deliver systems change alongside effective specialist services.

Changing Futures areas were (and continue to be) a natural grouping of areas based on their selection by DLUHC for participation in the Changing Futures programme. Providing focused support under the Changing Futures learning support contract enabled MEAM to deliver bespoke support to these areas, as well as programme-wide learning support activities.

Alongside this, MEAM Approach network members receiving only universal support could still tap into support provided via network events, activities, emails and check-in calls, without necessarily being reliant on a designated MEAM team

member to facilitate this. In addition, they could buy in additional elements of MEAM support on a commercial basis.

We also heard from some longstanding MEAM Approach network areas that they had reduced direct contact with MEAM staff after becoming more established in their local work, which they did not necessarily view as negative. In this way MEAM was arguably able to achieve impact by setting areas up to work sustainably on their own path:

“We opted for light touch [support]; we maintained contact and MEAM team colleagues were available if we needed support. [...] We did a lot of work with them at the beginning, developed the framework and pattern for our project. But then hit that point of maturity if you like. [...] Then we just had touch points.”

5.2 **Bespoke support allowed local area’s needs to be identified and met via flexible, one-to-one support**

As with previous evaluations, this research found the bespoke, supportive, flexible involvement of MEAM team members allowed areas to work with MEAM in a way that was most useful to them. This approach was highly valued by local areas. In particular areas reported that:

- **Bespoke support responded to each area’s specific needs.** Local areas highlighted the value of MEAM team members’ flexibility; they fit in with areas to identify what they need and tailor support to be most impactful for each area. This included for example: one-to-one support for the local staff member to have a space to reflect on their work; providing support organising and delivering meetings and workshops; producing resources; or being a backup for strategic meetings.

“[Support] was flexible, we could dip in and out. But we definitely used all our allocated time! There were different formats, like doing things offline, facilitating groups, etc. It was a vast range of support.”

- **Strong relationships could identify new areas of focus.** Getting to know areas’ needs and building strong relationships with area leads over a long period of time meant MEAM could offer support that areas may not otherwise have requested or realised was available:

“[MEAM team member] stepped in and offered. I wouldn’t have known to ask for such intensive support. It emerged organically out of our needs being responded to.”

- **Areas maintained agency over their work.** Local work was enhanced rather than directed by MEAM, which empowered areas while allowing them to view their own work more objectively.

“Our needs were met. We didn’t ever feel [MEAM team member] was coming in saying ‘this is what we need to do from MEAM’s

perspective'. It was bespoke. She responded to us. Helped to think about our work from our point of view. That was really valuable."

5.3 Bespoke support allowed local areas to feel supported and reassured

Local areas highlighted that a key aspect of the bespoke MEAM support was its reassuring, supportive presence for areas working on improving the system for those experiencing multiple disadvantage. This created an environment which encouraged areas to take up support and helped them to make progress in their work on multiple disadvantage. Examples included:

- **Creating a reflective space to solve problems without judgement.** Several areas highlighted that MEAM support provided a space where people could reach out for support if they needed it, without fear of judgement, and have confidence that MEAM would help:

"[MEAM team member] would hold reflective space for me to sit and mull over ideas. That wasn't very structured, but it was very held, and I felt very supported. Because they were kind of an independent person, there was less pressure. I didn't have to go in with any expectations or aims, I could kind of bring to them the kind of confusion that I might have been sitting in."

- **Skilled MEAM staff provided advice and reassurance.** As with previous evaluation work, there was agreement in the research interviews about the great skill, expertise and sensitivity of MEAM team members. This contributed to reassurance for areas and the feeling of trust that the support would be sensitive and impactful:

"[MEAM team member] is really knowledgeable. Didn't tread with hobnailed boots over things that needed to be handled with care. We lucked out. I didn't have to do a lot of figuring out – she fit in with us."

- **Areas benefited from long-term partnerships and trust.** Having a designated MEAM team member meant areas knew who to go to for support and communication. In some cases, local areas still made use of their established relationship with their MEAM team member, even after periods of bespoke support had concluded:

"It's almost like consultancy. That aspect is really good, and knowing that no matter what, I can reach out. I've never felt like I can't reach out, which is so good because sometimes working with certain agencies it feels inappropriate, but I feel like I could go with any question and never be judged. And there's always an answer."

5.4 Bespoke support allowed areas to maintain their focus on systems change

Several areas interviewed reported that a key benefit of MEAM support was the way it encouraged areas to maintain their systemic focus. All areas receiving support had an ambition to change local systems, to varying degrees. System

Intervention areas, whose support focused on this in detail, highlighted how useful systems-focused support was in creating a 'global' view of their local work. In particular they noted that:

- **Areas were supported to develop strategy and vision around multiple disadvantage** and think through the practicalities of designing and implementing systemic change in a complex system. This was provided via various activities delivered through the MEAM Systems Intervention Tool (Build, Act, Explore, Learn), including leadership events, workshops, helping with design, and encouraging local partnerships to take a systemic view via critical friend support:

"[The systems intervention support] helped frame how to go about doing work. We knew what our goals were and starting point, but MEAM was useful for critical friend type support, how to get to end goals, to operate across a complicated system and create a global view for systems work. They tailored the input to what our area needed."

- **An external perspective around strategy and direction enabled a focus on progress**, as well as the ability to bring in knowledge or make links with other areas working on related topics or approaches:

"[MEAM team member] is part of the steering group that was set up. And he's just a great guy to bounce ideas off and to discuss, how do we move things forward, connecting us with other areas that are doing similar or have similar challenges and that sort of thing."

- **MEAM's national reputation, expertise and influence could be used to support local work**, with local leads able to use MEAM's involvement to advocate for and gain partner buy-in to new ways of working and systems changes.

"The system change stuff has been a real struggle, but without MEAM we wouldn't have got on the first rung. And to some of the conversations with our strategic partners, I do think it gives us that gravitas. We can point to the local learning and move that on to the national learning and say, look, we're doing this, other partners up and down the country are doing that and they're achieving so much more because they've done their XY and Z and we're on that pathway. We are getting better with that."

5.5 **Bespoke support meant areas were likely to participate actively in and benefit from the MEAM network**

Areas receiving bespoke support packages reported that they also accessed the universal network activities and that this was partly a result of being supported and encouraged to do so by their designated MEAM team member. This meant they benefited from the impacts of the network discussed in the next section.

New areas particularly valued the 'new areas peer network' sessions, which allowed new areas to network with each other. It was suggested that this would benefit other areas too and such support is available via the strategic leads and frontline worker forums.

6 Impact of the universal MEAM network support activities

We heard from areas that there was, and continues to be, a great deal of value to be gained from being part of the MEAM Approach network. Some areas reported that they were currently participating in network activities and had experienced benefits linked to it. Other areas had previously participated and were keen to make greater use of the network again. Local areas valued the network for its great potential for sharing learning, its emotional support, and the support from its evidence base and national reputation.

Areas identified some ways in which network connections could be improved; for example, there were mixed views on the usefulness and ease of access to the online platform, Mighty Networks (see section 7.3).

6.1 Universal support allowed learning and good practice to be shared across the network

The network activities, events and connections allowed local areas to share knowledge, learning and resources. Local areas reported that this enabled:

- **Problem solving with peers**, with the network providing the option for areas to turn to peers if they had questions, and allowing areas to learn from and replicate approaches:

“I like the fact that the MEAM partnership is there and I like the fact that we can rely on our colleagues if we ask a question, then we can get that question answered. And we can look for certain different scenarios that we might be able to replicate.”

- **Preparation for challenges**, so that areas could better prepare for challenges they might face by learning from other areas who have done similar things first.

“I always try and get along to the peer support meetings, which is really handy... it's really good to hear what success people have had, what challenges they've had, how they've overcome them and the sort of resistance they might get from existing services.”

- **Sharing good practice** so that areas working on similar topics could learn from each other. For example, one area reported learning a new way of working, thanks to attending a meeting in another area:

“I went to a meeting in [other area] last week and that was one of the most valuable connections I've ever made in the MEAM network in terms of how they think about their work. I learned a lot about some of the trainings that they're using locally. [MEAM team member] has that connection across all of the different kind of local areas [...] [The

other area] wanted to learn and hear about what we were working on. So [MEAM team member] made that connection and it was a really helpful one for us too.”

6.2 Universal support allowed local areas to be inspired, motivated and reassured

It was reported that network events, activities and connections had an impact in terms of inspiring people and maintaining motivation to continue working on improving the system:

“[In peer support meetings], you also see how passionate people are across the country are about doing things. Sometimes you might be dealing locally with people who are a bit jaded and what have you... and just getting together with people who are passionate about it sort of helps to keep the flames going.”

Similarly, it was reported that the network allows areas to share issues and feel less alone, which contributes to reassurance and emotional support for areas:

“There’s comfort in hearing about shared issues – it’s not just your area experiencing something.”

6.3 Universal support as part of the MEAM Approach network provided resources and national recognition

There was a sense that the network provided emotional support hand-in-hand with practical support for areas. It was noted that:

- **MEAM provided resources areas would not otherwise have access to.** For example, areas could take up training on a wide range of topics (e.g. introduction to multiple disadvantage, systems thinking, coproduction and power, trauma-informed and strength-based approaches) and access a series of online resources.
- **MEAM offered a national reputation and evidence base.** As well as being true for areas receiving bespoke support from MEAM team members (see 5.4), areas found that being part of the network in general provided national recognition that helped their partnerships progress in their local work on multiple disadvantage. This allowed areas to speak with more confidence on issues, and to be more forceful in pushing to effect change.

“There’s an emotional thing about being part of the network. When dealing with these kinds of issues, access to network and advocacy helps. You get practical help and support. It helps you to speak with confidence, [knowing you’re] coming from a validated space. Research and evidence backing and recommendations that come out of that – it’s a massive how-to guide with emotional support attached. It prevents burnout and isolation.”

7 Challenges and opportunities for future MEAM support

As MEAM moves into 2024/25 it will be refreshing its support offer to the MEAM Approach network for the next stage of its work. As part of the planning for this, MEAM has been seeking the views of network members and MEAM staff.

Local areas were asked during this research for their views about the challenges and opportunities for future MEAM support. Overall, it was clear that local areas continue to benefit in multiple ways from being part of MEAM Approach network. The majority of responses related to the future universal support offer, particularly around network participation and involvement. Bespoke support was generally felt to be highly impactful and areas would like to see more of this in the future.

Many of the themes explored in this section chime with MEAM's current thinking about a future support model. More detail will be provided by MEAM on this in the near future.

7.1 Future minimum offer and engagement

Local areas were keen that MEAM continue to provide a minimum universal support offer including: access to the network (and improved online platform) to share learning with peers, national events, and the continued option to contact their designated MEAM team member.

The local areas felt that in return network members should provide: active engagement in the network (attending meetings and events, engaging with other areas), and a clear commitment to the MEAM Approach. One area described this as:

“Commitment to share, commitment to informing the national picture with local practice, commitment to trying to achieve goals and commit to the MEAM Approach. Have each area reflect and strive for the MEAM Approach and understand how we evaluate system change. [Share learning from] headline areas that impacted local influence. Focus on quality of partnerships between areas and creating space for difficult conversations.”

7.2 Enabling and encouraging network engagement

Reflections from local areas highlighted several challenges in encouraging engagement and participation in network activities:

- **Reliance on MEAM for continued communication.** Areas tended to rely on MEAM to contact them, especially areas that were accessing only universal support. Reaching out more regularly to less well-engaged areas might

therefore encourage engagement, but requires resource within the MEAM team.

- **Reliance on individual MEAM team members.** There was a sense that some local areas view “MEAM” as being their designated contact, rather than as a broader organisational concept. This leads to challenges when that team member has less capacity or is not available.
- **Challenges when key local contacts move roles.** The movement of a local lead can significantly affect how much an area continues to engage with MEAM. For this research, out of 14 areas contacted, several did not respond and a small number had outdated contact details.

7.3 Refreshing the community

The desire for more connection was key among MEAM Approach network areas, especially those not accessing bespoke support; they wanted more updates, connection and sense of community. More awareness of other areas’ work would enable reaching out for learning, resources, or problem solving even when areas are not accessing bespoke support.

Suggestions around refreshing this sense of community included:

- **Desire for more active, smaller network events/communities based on geography, common characteristics or areas of focus/specialism.** Some areas were keen to create localised networks that are organised geographically, by shared characteristics, or by shared areas of specialism, focus or concern (such as systems change or trauma informed work). They felt this could result in the network events/communities being more active and maintaining connection between meetings. Although this is in theory already possible, areas felt Mighty Networks did not currently allow this easily.
- **Improving use and promotion of Mighty Networks.** Most areas agreed the online platform was a useful tool to connect with areas and access a pool of resources, but it was not yet functioning as well as it could and needed more engagement. They felt it would benefit from more development and promotion, to encourage participation.
- **More engaging communication.** Local areas receive general emails/newsletters, but some felt this does not always encourage them to engage, particularly if they are used to non-generic emails from their MEAM team member. A suggestion was made around the opportunity to opt-in to more personalised but still group-style emails on specific topics.
- **Linking areas for peer review.** One area suggested introducing peer review between areas, where areas can work together to review each other’s interventions/work and hold one another accountable to the MEAM framework.

7.4 Providing as much bespoke support as possible

Local areas were keen for MEAM to provide as much bespoke support as possible, for the reasons set out in section 5. However, they also recognised the costs of bespoke support and the accompanying challenges of providing this long-term.

One suggestion around this, made by some local areas accessing universal support, was that a small amount of additional bespoke support could go a long way. They suggested that a limited, focused amount of support to help them reaffirm MEAM principles and review their local strategy would give them confidence to move forward and revitalise their local area's commitment and engagement with MEAM. This could make use of the valuable impact of bespoke support in a more short-term way:

“It would be good to have [MEAM team member] down again to review where we are and where MEAM feel like we are. Take a step back to look at: this is the network, this is what we deliver, is there something within that we're missing or should be engaging with it.”

7.5 Continuing to promote engagement with the commercial offer

MEAM has had some good initial success in engaging local areas with its commercial offer. Increasing uptake of the commercial pathway will help make MEAM more sustainable by providing a reliable and larger commercial income stream alongside opportunities for grant funding.

The interviews suggest it is important for MEAM to continue to communicate and promote the nature and value of its training and consultancy offers. Local areas emphasised the importance of these offers being bespoke to their needs, with some areas suggesting that initial (free) support to help identify needs and areas for development might be helpful. For some areas, the transition away from free-to-access support (via previous grant funding) has proved challenging.

7.6 Maintaining network engagement and momentum when support packages end

Local areas noted that it will be important to consider options for areas when bespoke support packages end, to ensure areas are set up to move to universal support. For example, working with areas to consider what to prioritise when funding ends may allow them to avoid relying on MEAM for communication and continued network participation.

8 Recommendations / areas for further consideration

Overall, this research found that many of the key impactful and effective ways of working MEAM has developed and provided in the past were still in evidence during the 2022-2024 period, as part of the changed support offer.

This research suggests some key areas of focus for MEAM as they plan their approach to support for 2024/25 onwards:

- Continue to build a sustainable, universal support offer for network members so that areas can continue sharing learning and maintaining momentum on tackling multiple disadvantage (see 7.3).
- Provide as much direct bespoke support as possible within the confines of available grant and commercial funding, as this is valued by local areas (see 7.4).
- Focus marketing activity, within and outside the network, on the bespoke nature of MEAM's consultancy and training offers and consider providing (free) support to help local areas explore their needs and areas for development (see 7.5).
- Consider how to maintain areas' progress and momentum when their focused support packages come to an end (see 7.6).
- Maintain regular contact with all local areas in the network, including those only accessing universal support.

9 Appendix: local area sample

MEAM area	Support package received	Joined network in...
Buckinghamshire	Bespoke support: New joiner area package	2022-23
Medway	Bespoke support: New joiner area package	2022-23
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	Bespoke support: Systems intervention package (grant funded, Y1 of 2022-24, commercial follow on)	2010-11 ¹
Camden	Bespoke support: System intervention package (grant-funded, Y1 of 2022-24)	2022-23 ²
Durham	Universal support only: General membership package	2017-18
Haringey	Universal support only: General membership package	2018-19
Norwich	Universal support only: General membership package	2017-18
York	Universal support only: General membership package	2014-15
Nottingham	Bespoke support: Changing Futures package	2022-23
Rochdale	Bespoke Support: Changing Futures package	2020-21 ³

¹ Cambridgeshire has been involved in the MEAM Approach network since its inception because it was a MEAM Approach pilot area from 2010. Local work was expanded to cover Peterborough in 2020-21. The two areas are supported together by MEAM.

² Camden was part of Fulfilling Lives Islington and Camden during the programme's operation from 2014 to 2022. MEAM provided support to the Fulfilling Lives programme during this period but the areas were not part of the MEAM Approach network. Camden then joined the MEAM Approach network at the end of the Fulfilling Lives programme funding period.

³ Rochdale was part of the Greater Manchester MEAM Approach network from 2020-21. It now receives support from MEAM under the Changing Futures Learning Partner contract as Greater Manchester is a Changing Futures area.



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