

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Sub title or department

Transfer of the Pluss Organisation to Turning Point Limited



PLYMOUTH
CITY COUNCIL

STAGE 1: What is being assessed and by whom?

What is being assessed - including a brief description of aims and objectives?

The Pluss Organisation ('the Organisation') is a Local Authority Controlled Company limited by guarantee. Its membership comprises Devon County Council, Torbay Council, Somerset Council and Plymouth City Council. It was set up on 1st August 2005 as a result of the transfer by Devon, Torbay and Plymouth Councils of their respective Industrial Services Group operations to the Organisation. Somerset Council transferred its Industrial Services operations in June 2006 and became a member of the Organisation on this date.

The Organisation exists for the main purpose of providing services, facilities and premises enabling disabled and other disadvantaged persons to obtain sheltered employment, and other employment opportunities in the community. A significant number of people with disabilities and others facing varying degrees of disadvantage are employed within the Organisation including its manufacturing operations. The member Councils are currently in separate contracts with Pluss for the provision of Supported Employment services and.....services. The Organisation also provides services to external organisations, including the DWP.

The members of the Organisation intend to transfer their interest in the Organisation to Turning Point Limited on or after 1st April 2014. Turning Point is a private company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. It operates as a Social Enterprise and its objects and service provision base are closely aligned with those of the Organisation. Its services include the provision of assistance and support to people with substance misuse and mental health issues with employment for such persons being its central focus. At a time

STAGE 1: What is being assessed and by whom?

of decreasing funding available to the member Councils for the procurement of services from the Organisation, the transfer to Turning Point will put the Company in a stronger commercial position which will enable it to secure contracts from sources other than the member Councils. This should ensure that the current employment of the workforce and the creation of new employment opportunities are secured to a greater extent than if the ownership of the Organisation was retained by the member Councils. It is not anticipated that service users will be adversely affected by the transfer as the current services will be continue to be provided to the community with the potential additional benefit that additional specialist support services will be made available to communities within the areas of the owner authorities which would benefit disabled and other disadvantaged groups.

The transaction will be a straightforward transfer of the member councils' interests in the Organisation which will retain its identity. Accordingly service delivery to users will remain essentially unchanged and there are no TUPE implications as the Organisation will transfer in its current form with the same structure.

A condition of the purchase by Turning Point is the closure of the LGPS by the Organisation and the employees will be offered alternative pension provision. The Organisation has in any event put forward proposals for the closure of the pension scheme to the member Councils irrespective of whether the transfer to Turning Point proceeds. Whilst unfortunate, this is considered necessary to put the Company on a stronger commercial footing to enable it to compete effectively with other organisations for the award of contracts for the provision of its services. This will facilitate protection of the employment of its current employees with the possibility that new employment opportunities will arise and be available to both the current workforce and also to other disabled and disadvantaged persons who have yet to find employment.

Consultation with staff on the proposed closure of the LGPS and transfer to Turning Point will be undertaken by the Organisation and reported to the member Councils so that staff

STAGE 1: What is being assessed and by whom?	
	will be fully informed of the proposals and the implications for them. Employees are represented by Trade Unions collectively who will be heavily involved in discussions and negotiations with the Organisation ensuring they have access to good advice and representation.
Responsible Officer	Steve Crane
Department and Service	Corporate Support, Legal Services
Date of Assessment	

STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact				
Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
Age	The average age of the employees of the Organisation is 44.84 for females and 45 .53 for males	No. The services currently provided by the Organisation would continue to be provided within the same locality and from the same premises and consequently there are no adverse implications in respect of Transport or access to the workplace for employees and no implications for service	Monitor the employee consultation by the Company on the proposed transfer to Turning Point Ltd and closure of the LGPS	All member Councils

STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact				
Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
		<p>users on service accessibility. The transfer would potentially result in additional support services being made available to disadvantaged groups within the areas of the owning authorities.</p> <p>The pension scheme closure would affect all employees of the Organisation including those outside of this characteristic.</p> <p>There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.</p>		
Disability	Many of the Organisation's employees are disabled or disadvantaged. Of the Organisation's 656 employees 308 are disabled.	No. The services currently provided by the organisation would continue to be provided within the same locality and from the same premises. Consequently there are no implications in respect of Transport or access to the	None	N/A

STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact				
Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
	<p>Divided into disability groups, numbers are;</p> <p>Mobility/Dexterity Restrictions – 183</p> <p>Hearing and/or Speech Impairment - 31</p> <p>Learning Disability – 36</p> <p>Mental Health disability – 44</p> <p>Visual Impairment - 14</p>	<p>workplace for employees and no implications for service users on service accessibility. The transfer would potentially result in additional support services being made available to disadvantaged groups within the areas of the owning authorities.</p> <p>The pension scheme closure would affect all employees of the Organisation including those outside of this characteristic.</p> <p>There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.</p>		
Faith, Religion or Belief	Out of 656 employees, 485 did not respond to the Organisation's request for information and 72 respondees practiced no religion. Of	No. The services provided by the Organisation would continue to be provided and made available to persons irrespective of their Faith, Religion or Belief.	None	N/A

STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact				
Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
	<p>the remainder and divided into groups, numbers are;</p> <p>Buddism – 1</p> <p>Christianity – 91</p> <p>Hinduism – 1</p> <p>Islam – 1</p> <p>Sikhism – 1</p> <p>Wicca – 1</p> <p>Other - 3</p>	<p>The pension scheme closure would affect all employees of the Organisation including those outside of this characteristic.</p> <p>There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.</p>		
Gender - including marriage, pregnancy and maternity	<p>Of the 656 employees, 256 are female and 399 are male.</p> <p>7 employees are presently on maternity leave</p>	<p>No. The services currently provided by the organisation would continue to be provided within the same locality and from the same premises. Consequently there are no implications in respect of Transport or access to the workplace for employees and no implications for service users on service accessibility.</p>	None	N/A

STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact				
Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
		<p>The transfer would potentially result in additional support services being made available to disadvantaged groups within the areas of the owning authorities.</p> <p>The pension scheme closure would affect all employees of the Organisation including those outside of this characteristic.</p> <p>There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.</p>		
Gender Reassignment	No information held by the Organisation.	No. The services provided by the Organisation would continue to be provided and made available to persons irrespective of whether they have undergone or are undergoing Gender Reassignment.	None	N/A

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Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
		<p>The pension scheme closure would affect all employees of the Organisation including those outside of this characteristic.</p> <p>There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.</p>		
Race	<p>Of the 656 employees, 521 are White British and 106 did not respond to the Organisation's request for information.</p> <p>Remaining Group Numbers are;</p> <p>Asian or Asian British – Indian – 4</p> <p>Asian or Asian British – Pakistani – 1</p> <p>Asian or Asian British – Other – 1</p>	<p>No. The services provided by the Organisation would continue to be provided and made available to persons irrespective of their Race or ethnic background</p> <p>The pension scheme closure would affect all employees of the Organisation including those outside of this characteristic.</p> <p>There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.</p>	None	N/A

STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact				
Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
	Black or Black British – African – 2 Black or Black British – Caribbean – 1 Chinese – 2 Mixed – White and Asian – 2 Mixed – White and Black African – 1 Mixed – White and Black Caribbean – 1 White Irish – 3 White – Other - 11			
Sexual Orientation -including Civil Partnership		No. The services provided by the Organisation would continue to be provided and made available to persons irrespective of their Sexual Orientation.	None	N/A

STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact				
Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)	Any adverse impact?	Actions	Timescale and who is responsible?
		<p>The pension scheme closure would affect all employees of the Organisation including those outside of this characteristic.</p> <p>There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.</p>		

STAGE 3: Are there any implications for the following? If so, please record 'Actions' to be taken		
Local Priorities	Implications	Timescale and who is responsible?
Reduce the inequality gap, particularly in health between communities.	<p>The actions identified above will not have a negative impact on staff.</p> <p>No adverse impact on reducing the inequality gap has been identified, as staff and service users will still be employed and have access to the full range of services available and receive appropriate support. This enables individuals affected to continue to work and promotes social inclusion.</p>	

STAGE 3: Are there any implications for the following? If so, please record 'Actions' to be taken		
Local Priorities	Implications	Timescale and who is responsible?
Good relations between different communities (community cohesion).	No adverse impact on community cohesion has been identified, as for staff and service users affected, this will continue to help break down barriers and build community cohesion with the wider community.	
Human Rights	<p>This service recognises Article 14 of Human Rights Act – The right to receive Equal Treatment and prohibits discrimination including sex, race, religion and economic and social status in conjunction with the Equalities Act which includes age and disability.</p> <p>All staff and service users will be treated fairly and that their human rights will be respected.</p> <p>No adverse impact on human rights has been identified.</p>	

STAGE 4: Publication			
Director, Assistant Director/Head of Service approving EIA.		Date	