



Meeting: Council Meeting

Date: 22 October 2015

Wards Affected: All

Report Title: Transfer of PLUSS to a Community Interest Company

Is the decision a key decision? Yes

When does the decision need to be implemented? Immediately

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Supporting Officer Contact Details: Caroline Taylor, Director of Adult Services, caroline.taylor @torbay.gov.uk

1. Proposal and Introduction

- 1.1 Approval is sought from the Council to relinquish its ownership of PLUSS to allow PLUSS to convert to a Community Interest Company (CIC).
- 1.2 Subject to the other three local authority owners approving a report in the same terms as this report.

2. Reason for Proposal

- 2.1 Members will recall receiving a report at the 5th December 2013 meeting of Council at which it was agreed to dispose of PLUSS to Turning Point on the terms as outlined in the report. The transaction with Turning Point did not proceed as Turning Point withdrew from negotiations in February 2014. Since that time there has been further discussions with the Board of PLUSS (which contains directors appointed by the local authority owners) about its future and this report seeks to update members on the current position and asks for approval for the Council to relinquish ownership of PLUSS so that it may become a Community Interest Company.
- 2.2 The decision to relinquish ownership of PLUSS is dependent on the other three local authority owners also agreeing and reports will be taken to the respective decision making forums of Plymouth, Somerset and Devon Councils during October 2015.
- 2.3 Prior to August 2005, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Councils provided a range of employment and training programmes for people with disabilities and operated an equipment store. Known as the Industrial Services Group (ISG) this service was overseen by a Joint Social Services Committee but the management of the service was unwieldy. Following a review it was concluded that there was a need for change to ensure that the service could be delivered in a more cohesive and efficient manner.

- 2.4 The upshot of the review process was that in August 2005, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Councils formed PLUSS, a local authority controlled company, limited by guarantee. PLUSS effectively took over what had hitherto been undertaken by ISG. It delivered services to the three member Councils through a series of service contracts as well as providing services to other external organisations, including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- 2.5 In June 2006, Somerset County Council transferred like services to PLUSS and became a member alongside the three existing member authorities.
- 2.6 PLUSS has since established itself as one of the leading organisations of its type in the country. Over the years the value of its contracts with the four local authorities has reduced such that it no longer carries out the bulk of its work for the four member Councils. It does, however, have a number of significant contracts with other public sector bodies.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1 That the Council relinquishes its ownership of PLUSS to enable PLUSS to convert to a Community Interest Company;
- 3.2 That Council notes that its approval in 3.1 above is subject to the other three local authority owners approving a report in the same terms as this submitted report; and
- 3.3 That the Assistant Director of Corporate and Business Services be authorised to sign all documents necessary in order to facilitate the process of the Council relinquishing its ownership of PLUSS and PLUSS converting to a Community Interest Company.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Report laying out the reason for the proposal and background

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 3: Financial Information Exempt

Background Documents

None