

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Conversion of the Pluss Organisation to a Community Interest Company (CIC)

STAGE 1: What is being assessed and by whom?	
<p>What is being assessed - including a brief description of aims and objectives?</p>	<p>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 at this time.</p> <p>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 Community Equipment services. The Organisation also provides services to external organisations, including the DWP.</p> <p>The Organisation wishes to convert from a company limited by guarantee owned by the four member Councils to a Community Interest Company with ownership and a governance structure to be determined by the Organisation with the member Councils relinquishing their ownership and interest in the Organisation. Operation as a CIC would ensure the Organisation would retain its ethos of benefitting the community as CICs' are set up and regulated for that purpose. The conversion would also protect the future benefit to the community by way of the requirement for an asset lock which ensures the assets of the Organisation are permanently devoted to the overarching social and community objectives of the CiC.. This reduces the risk of the Organisation being converted to a private sector for profit enterprise in the future. CIC status for the Organisation should also provide reassurance to third parties dealing with the organisation, particularly funders, which should enhance the prospects for the Company for securing loan finance which</p>

STAGE 1: What is being assessed and by whom?	
	could enable the company to expand/diversify its operations for the benefit of the community. The member Councils support the proposal which will also mean the Organisation is able to operate independently from the councils. The current employment of the workforce would be unaffected by the proposal as the Organisation is merely adopting an alternative governance structure. It is not anticipated that service users will be adversely affected by the proposal as the current services will be continue to be provided to the community for the benefit of disabled people both as service users and employees.
Responsible Officer	Anne-Marie Bond
Department and Service	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	Monitor the employee consultation by the Company on the proposal to convert to a CIC	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?
		implications for service users on service accessibility. There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.		
Disability	<p>Many of the Organisation's employees are disabled or disadvantaged. Of the Organisation's 656 employees 308 are disabled.</p> <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>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> <p>There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.</p>	None	N/A
Faith, Religion or Belief	Out of 656 employees, 485 did not respond to	No. The services provided by the Organisation would	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 Organisation's request for information and 72 respondees practiced no religion. Of the remainder and divided into groups, numbers are;</p> <p>Buddism – 1 Christianity – 91 Hinduism – 1 Islam – 1 Sikhism – 1 Wicca – 1 Other - 3</p>	<p>continue to be provided and made available to persons irrespective of their Faith, Religion or Belief.</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?
		There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.		
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. There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.	None	N/A
Race	Of the 656 employees, 521 are White British and 106 did not respond to the Organisation's request for information. Remaining Group Numbers are; Asian or Asian British – Indian – 4 Asian or Asian British – Pakistani – 1	No. The services provided by the Organisation would continue to be provided and made available to persons irrespective of their Race or ethnic background There would be no differential impact on persons within this characteristic.	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?
	Asian or Asian British – Other – 1 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 information held by the Organisation.	No. The services provided by the Organisation would continue to be provided and made available to persons irrespective of their Sexual Orientation. There would be no differential	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?
		impact on persons within this characteristic.		

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> <p>The proposal will ensure that an essential service is maintained for disabled people both as service users and employees.</p>	No actions required.
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	No actions required.

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?
	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 Equality 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>	No actions required.

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