

Bristol City Council Equality Impact Assessment Form

(Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance when completing this form)



Name of proposal	The Bristol Pound grant funding
Directorate and Service Area	Place – Economy - ED
Name of Lead Officer	Howard Swift

Step 1: What is the proposal?

Please explain your proposal in Plain English, avoiding acronyms and jargon. This section should explain how the proposal will impact service users, staff and/or the wider community.

1.1 What is the proposal?

To discontinue from year 2017-18 core annual grant funding of £30,000 to The Bristol Pound cic, the social enterprise that operates the Bristol Pound alternative currency scheme in the city. This grant funding was originally agreed for 3 years to support the start up of the Bristol Pound in 2014. In addition to the £30k from Economic Development (ED) budget, there was a £20k contribution originally provided by the Mayor's Office and later, in year 2015-16, by Bristol Futures group (Business Change) which has since been restructured. This 3 year funding period has now come to an end, and ED, after consultation with Sustainability team, have neither the revenue funding capacity to extend support nor made any prior commitment to do so.

Step 2: What information do we have?

Decisions must be evidence-based, and involve people with protected characteristics that could be affected. Please use this section to demonstrate understanding of who could be affected by the proposal.

2.1 What data or evidence is there which tells us who is, or could be affected?

The Bristol Pound cic has provided the Council with quarterly reports related to the grant funding agreement and milestones and performance targets set – for the growth of the scheme (increase in members and business users / account holders). At end Sept 2016, TBP has just over 2,000 members of which 857 were business users. The main purpose of ED grant was to support growth

in business users. The main clusters of members /users are found in Old City, Southville, Bedminster, Ashley, Bishopston and Horfield. There has been relatively low take up in the more disadvantaged neighbourhoods of the city.

2.2 Who is missing? Are there any gaps in the data?

The quarterly reporting format did require TBP to provide equalities data (eg. take up by specific equalities group) and some analysis has been provided.

2.3 How have we involved, or will we involve, communities and groups that could be affected?

We have maintained a regular dialogue with the TBP directors / team related to their annual grant funding and need to generate and diversify income sources for longer term sustainability. As the grant funding was agreed for a the business start up / early stage period of 3 years, it was not deemed necessary or appropriate to undertake any wider consultation of communities.

Step 3: Who might the proposal impact?

Analysis of impacts on people with protected characteristics must be rigorous. Please demonstrate your analysis of any impacts in this section, referring to all of the equalities groups as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

3.1 Does the proposal have any potentially adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics?

Not directly – except in so far as TBP may come under financial pressure to increase revenue from individual membership or user fees. But TBP could opt not to increase fees to people with protected characteristics.

3.2 Can these impacts be mitigated or justified? If so, how?

Yes. TBP could exempt people as above from fee increases and raise fees to people in full or part time employment and /or businesses instead. In the medium to long term, TBP must in any case evolve a sustainable business model, and their start up grant funding was offered with this objective in view and not dependency on Council and/or other grant sources.

3.3 Does the proposal create any benefits for people with protected characteristics?

No. But TBP will still be free as a member-owned social enterprise to develop its own offer and incentives to attract specific groups of people in the community to join or keep using the scheme, and also to raise funds from national or local charitable sources for such purposes.

3.4 Can they be maximised? If so, how?

As 3.3 above.

Step 4: So what?

The Equality Impact Assessment must be able to influence the proposal and decision. This section asks how your understanding of impacts on people with protected characteristics has influenced your proposal, and how the findings of your Equality Impact Assessment can be measured going forward.

4.1 How has the equality impact assessment informed or changed the proposal?

No. Due to the financial constraints on the Council at the present time, there is no 'half-way house' which would reliably mitigate any such direct or indirect impacts. Nor is there any evidence or likelihood that one social or demographic group will be much more affected than any other by termination of this initial 3 years grant funding support.

4.2 What actions have been identified going forward?

The Council ED Team will continue to help TBP with advice and non-financial support via its High Streets & Local Centres programme, and the Council more widely by accepting payments for Council Tax and Business Rates in Bristol Pounds and, where possible, paying its suppliers in the currency as part of its Social Value Act policies. It will also be open to further proposals by TBP to pilot a new business-to-business mutual credit scheme, using a virtual currency, and a request for the Council to provide loan or loan guarantee, provided the need and business case is clearly demonstrated and certain conditions are fulfilled, including match funding from other sources. However, no assurances can be provided in advance that this support will be provided.

4.3 How will the impact of your proposal and actions be measured moving forward?

We will continue to seek regular reports from TBP on the growth of individual / business members and the implementation of its development plan, including measures and targets for financial viability and sustainability.

Service Director Sign-Off:

Equalities Officer Sign Off: Anne
James Equality and Community
Cohesion Officer 19/1/2017