



Title of proposed EIA	World of Work Continuation Project (WoW2)
Reference No	EQUA604
EA is in support of	New Service
Review Frequency	Two Years
Date of first review	01/12/2023
Directorate	Education and Skills
Division	Skills & Employability
Service Area	Employment Access Team
Responsible Officer(s)	 Kam Hundal
Quality Control Officer(s)	 Hilary Mills
Accountable Officer(s)	 Ilgun Yusuf
Purpose of proposal	To conduct an equality impact assessment of the WoW2 project proposal
Data sources	Consultation Results; relevant reports/strategies; Statistical Database (please specify); relevant research
Please include any other sources of data	<p>Since the project proposal was set out in a report outlining ESF funding opportunities on 29 October 2019 the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture has been briefed on the development of the project proposal and fully supports the submission. Officers in Legal and Governance, Procurement and City Finance continue to be involved and have input to the preparation of this report. Lead Officers from Education & Skills Directorate including Birmingham Adult Education Service, 14-19 Participation & Skills Service, Careers Service, and Youth Service have also been involved in the development of the project and have agreed proposed delivery model. The project has been developed with input and support from DWP/JCP, the National Careers Service, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) and project delivery partners Clarion Futures and Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust. Dialogue has also taken place</p>

with University Hospital Birmingham, Birmingham Metropolitan College and South and City College Birmingham, the Construction Industry Training Board in the development of the project. The proposal has further discussed with the Local Birmingham Employment and Skills Boards which are made up of voluntary groups, employers, training providers and private sector representatives.

ASSESS THE IMPACT AGAINST THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Protected characteristic: Age

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Age details:

The policy aims to improve the employability of long term unemployed residents aged 25 years and over particularly those facing particular disadvantage from the labour market to and will engage those residents with no/low basic skills. The policy will promote activities within communities and lead to sustainable employment for some of the most disadvantaged individuals. There will be a sharing of work/knowledge and skills between different age groups and the potential for mentoring.

The policy does not disadvantage people (25+ years) who are not eligible for support through the project, as they will be signposted to alternative support to access work, training or education and other support needs.

Protected characteristic: Disability

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Disability details:

There are particular groups who have disproportionately high levels of unemployment. Those with a disability have a much higher rate of unemployment than for the non-disabled. The employment rate for disabled residents is 22.7 percentage

points lower than for non-disabled residents. The disabled unemployment rate in Birmingham (13.8%) is also well above the corresponding rate for the UK (6.9%). The source for this date is the Office for National Statistics Q2 2020.

The project proposal includes specifically targeted support for people with significant barriers to employment, including those who experience Mental Ill Health and Learning Disabilities. These people will be supported by specialist workers offering a holistic and tailored service to meet their needs. The employment strand of the project will seek to improve the employment opportunities available to these individuals.

Protected characteristic: Sex

Not Applicable

Gender details:

There should be no negative impact on individuals as the proposed revised Proposal gives equal access to all regardless of gender.

Protected characteristics: Gender Reassignment

Not Applicable

Gender reassignment details:

All assessment planning and outcomes related to the implementation of the proposal are individualised and address issues specific to the individual which will include transgender issues. The service will be sensitive to the needs of a wide range of people and ensure compliance with data protection policies and procedures. There should be no negative impact on individuals.

Protected characteristics: Marriage and Civil Partnership

Not Applicable

Marriage and civil partnership details:

All assessment planning and outcomes related to the implementation of the proposal are individualised and address issues specific to the individual regardless of relationship status. The service will be sensitive to the needs of a wide range of people and ensure compliance with data protection policies and procedures. There should be no negative impact on individuals.

Protected characteristics: Pregnancy and Maternity

Not Applicable

Pregnancy and maternity details:

No data is available to assess if proposed proposal has an equality impact relating to pregnancy or maternity. Pregnancy or maternity will not affect people's eligibility or take-up because the programme is holistic and will continue to offer support tailored to an individual's needs.

Protected characteristics: Race

Service Users / Stakeholders; Wider Community

Race details:

All assessment, planning and outcomes related to the implementation of the proposal will be individualised and address issues specific to the individual, which will include issues related to religion or belief. The service will be non-discriminatory, irrespective of an individual's BAME background. There should be no negative impact on individuals. No

data is available on the religion or faith of people who will be eligible for this programme. All individuals accessing the project provision will continue to be treated fairly, irrespective of their BAME background. The project proposal is built upon the principles of equality of access.

They will not be asked to undertake any activity which goes against their beliefs, and allowances will be made to reflect religious holidays and practices. It is not anticipated, based on knowledge of proposal and provision design, that the BAME background will affect their eligibility or take-up as providers will continue to offer support tailored to individual circumstances.

Protected characteristics: Religion or Beliefs

Religion or beliefs details:

Not Applicable

All assessment, planning and outcomes related to the implementation of the proposal will be individualised and address issues specific to the individual, which will include issues related to religion or belief. The service will be non-discriminatory, irrespective of an individual's religion or belief. There should be no negative impact on individuals. No data is available on the religion or faith of people who will be eligible for this programme. All individuals accessing the project provision will continue to be treated fairly, irrespective of their religion or beliefs.

They will not be asked to undertake any activity which goes against their beliefs, and allowances will be made to reflect religious holidays and practices. It is not anticipated, based on knowledge of proposal and provision design, that the religion or belief of individuals will affect their eligibility or

take-up as providers will continue to offer support tailored to individual circumstances.

Protected characteristics: Sexual Orientation

Not Applicable

Sexual orientation details:

All assessment planning and outcomes related to the implementation of the proposal are individualised and address issues specific to the individual which will include issues related to sexual orientation. The proposal is sensitive to the needs of a wide range of people and ensures compliance with data protection policies and procedures. There should be no negative impact on individuals.

Socio-economic impacts

The WoW continuation project will engage with 1,576 long term unemployed (73%) and inactive participants (27%) providing support in training and employment. It will target those with no/low basic skills, people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds (BAME) women, lone parents, people with disabilities and health conditions including those living in areas of high unemployment across Birmingham.

Using the available levers and enablers such as the Procurement Framework Policy for Jobs & Skills; Planning Protocol for Jobs & Skills; and the Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility, EAT will continue to maximise and influence the development of training pathways, work experience opportunities, graduate placements both paid and unpaid, jobs and apprenticeships. We will also maximise links to employers through our BDI team, Inclusive Growth Directorate, WMGC, the

GBSLEP Skills and Growth Hubs, actively working with employers in those sectors where there is growth opportunity and potential despite the economic challenge Covid-19 presents.

The benefits of this proposed project will be the delivery of intensive bespoke support to the target cohorts that have multiple issues and are distant from the labour market, particularly for those that have no/low basic skills, with personalised support assisting these people into sustainable employment outcomes.

Increased skills levels, particularly at basic skills level with people supported to access basic skills qualifications and as a result directly impacting on the number of residents with qualifications; with Birmingham currently below the UK average for qualifications.

Employment has a direct positive impact on quality of life and health outcomes for people moving into employment, impacting on unemployment levels across Birmingham and individual wards

Moving someone from welfare to work could contribute towards generating an approximate basic saving of £15,042 per person per annum to the public purse with reduced benefits payments and increased tax contributions (BCC/ONS/DWP Apr 2020).

Raised awareness of careers and opportunities in growth sectors, often where there are an increasing number of vacancies opening up the career paths to a wider labour market and linking training directly to job opportunities.

Wider benefits on the aspirations of residents, improving their future employability and career opportunities across a range of sectors.

Benefits to employers who have higher qualified candidates with targeted programmes to assist them in filling vacancies where they may previously have identified difficulties in recruiting local residents with the right skills.

Please indicate any actions arising from completing this screening exercise.

There are no relevant issues, so no action plans are currently required. as a result of this screening exercise.

Please indicate whether a full impact assessment is recommended

NO

What data has been collected to facilitate the assessment of this policy/proposal?

The project proposal is a direct response to the objectives as set out in the ESF call to support long term unemployed and inactive adults aged **25 and over** and non-NEETs who reside within Birmingham impacting on the high levels of unemployment, which stands at 10.2% compared to a national average of 3.9% and in particular focus on areas of high claimant unemployment, which in inner city parts of Birmingham are more than 3 times the national average of 6.5%.

The November Unemployment Update with figures for October 2020 includes the following key findings:

- Unadjusted claimant count unemployment **across all ages** in the city increased by 950 to 81,815 in October. Claimant count unemployment is now 33,255 higher than it was in February prior to the lockdown; an increase of 68% in claimant numbers. The highest since 1987.
- Birmingham's claimant unemployment rate **across all ages** stands at 15.3%; above both the West Midlands (9.1%) and the UK (7.7%) rates.

- Unadjusted unemployment decreased in 9 of the 10 core cities between September and October 2020.
- Claimant count unemployment increased in 45 of the city's 69 wards last month.

There are particular groups who have disproportionately high levels of unemployment. Those with a disability have a much higher rate of unemployment than for the non-disabled. The employment rate for disabled residents is 22.7 percentage points lower than for non-disabled residents. The disabled unemployment rate in Birmingham (13.8%) is also well above the corresponding rate for the UK (6.9%). The source for this date is the Office for National Statistics Q2 2020.

Unemployment levels are above national averages for Birmingham residents from BAME groups. The BAME unemployment rate for the area is 12.2% compared to an unemployment rate of 6.7% for white residents, a BAME unemployment gap of over 5 percentage points. (Source: ONS/APS Q2 2020). There are significant concentrations of unemployment in particular local areas mainly located in the inner city. In October 2020, Handsworth has the highest claimant unemployment proportion at 20.5% over 3 times the national rate of 6.3%. (source ONS/NOMIS).

The above statistics have been used to facilitate the assessment of the project proposal.

The project proposal builds on models of delivery implemented in recent programmes delivered by BCC's Employment Access Team and evidenced based practice from a range of successful programmes including Progression Pathways (also known as WoW1) which completed on 31/10/20, and has engaged with 656

Participants, of this, 254 (39%) have been supported into employment, of those registered:

- 67% were from a BAME background
- 22% were aged 50 or over
- 15% declared a disability
- 16% declared having no Basic Skills
- 16% declared themselves as a Lone Parent

Please note the above figures are inclusive of initially reported stats from our Delivery Partners, which have yet to be fully verified.

Other project based evidence includes the Flexible Support Fund (Project 20,000) which resulted in the upskilling and qualifications for participants and included bespoke targeted training for lone parents and the BCC & CITB Joint Investment Strategy Construction project which completed in March 2017. The Project was developed as part of a national Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) programme to deliver joint investment plans supporting the construction industry within key cities. The project focused on delivering construction industry training to 545 unemployed participants, addressing local skills gaps and creating employment and skills opportunities leading to jobs with construction employers – the project exceed its targets for training and job outputs.

- 545 (101 NEETs/LTU) unemployed individuals supported to access industry related accredited qualifications target 250 of which 50 NEETs/LTU
- Supported 337 (target 150) job entries into the construction sector including 55 (target 10) apprenticeships where people gained their first job within the construction sector.
- 36 businesses supported with work force development.

Consultation analysis

Since the project proposal was set out in a report outlining ESF funding opportunities on 29 October 2019 the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture has been briefed on the development of the project proposal and fully supports the submission. Officers in Legal and Governance, Procurement and City Finance continue to be involved and have input to the preparation of this report. Lead Officers from Education & Skills Directorate including Birmingham Adult Education Service, 14-19 Participation & Skills Service, Careers Service, and Youth Service have also been involved in the development of the project and have agreed proposed delivery model. The project has been developed with input and support from DWP/JCP, the National Careers Service, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) and project delivery partners Clarion Futures and Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust. Dialogue has also taken place with University Hospital Birmingham, Birmingham Metropolitan College and South and City College Birmingham, the Construction Industry Training Board in the development of the project. The proposal has further discussed with the Local Birmingham Employment and Skills Boards which are made up of voluntary groups, employers, training providers and private sector representatives.

Adverse impact on any people with protected characteristics.

There is no adverse impact on any people with protected characteristics.

Could the policy/proposal be modified to reduce or eliminate any adverse impact? N/A

How will the effect(s) of this policy/proposal on equality be monitored?

The project proposal has its own Equality and Sustainability Plan and Policy as required by ESF and the Funding Authority DWP and these will be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Project's Steering Group. Delivery partners on the project will also be committed towards these plans and policies as part of their COGA agreement with us on the project.

What data is required in the future?

DWP require quarterly monitoring returns in relation to outputs and results and these will be regularly reviewed to ensure that the project is meeting its required targets. Within these targets impact on people with disabilities, BAME, 50+ and lone parents will be measured.

Are there any adverse impacts on any particular group(s)

No

If yes, please explain your reasons for going ahead.

N/A

Initial equality impact assessment of your proposal

Consulted People or Groups

Informed People or Groups

Summary and evidence of findings from your EIA

The proposal aims to improve the employability of long term unemployed residents aged 25 and over, particularly those facing particular disadvantage from the labour market, to access and effectively move into sustainable employment. Employment has a direct positive impact on quality of life and health outcomes for people moving into employment. The equality assessment has identified that the project should continue to have a positive impact on the following protected characteristics: Age, Race and Disability, through providing specific progression pathways that is person-centred and

flexible enough to include employment, education and training outcomes. For example, individuals will be able to access industry-led upskilling programmes in local community-based venues. The proposal will contribute towards inclusive economic growth by improving economic activity rates in those areas of Birmingham where there are enduring and structural issues related to unemployment and low skill levels and inactive participation in the labour market. The proposal will continue to have a positive direct impact upon this group of people and indirectly for people of all ages. Communities will benefit both economically and socially by helping to tackle unemployment and foster good relations by actively engaging with 'inactive' people. The Equality Assessment has demonstrated that consultation has been undertaken with relevant internal and external stakeholders and no equality adverse impacts have been identified. The proposed proposal has ongoing equality monitoring arrangements as a requirement of its EU funding. This includes statistical equality monitoring and the production of a Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Proposal and Implementation Plan.

QUALITY CONTORL SECTION

Submit to the Quality Control Officer for reviewing? Yes

Quality Control Officer comments

Decision by Quality Control Officer

Submit draft to Accountable Officer? No

Decision by Accountable Officer

Date approved / rejected by the Accountable Officer

Reasons for approval or rejection

Please print and save a PDF copy for your records Yes

Julie Bach

Person or Group

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