

Stage 3 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1	Title of Proposal:	Artbeat: Assessment of the impact if funding for Artbeat (from Mental Health & Learning Disability Services) were to be discontinued (Artbeat provides creative activities for people who are socially excluded by reason of mental illness and/or learning disability).
3.2	Service Area: Department:	People (Social Work)
3.3	Description:	<p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>Artbeat offers a range of creative therapies for people who are socially excluded by reason of mental illness and/or learning disability, poverty and isolation. It is based in Hawick, accepting clients from across the Borders although referrals typically come from within a 20 mile radius of the town. It is open weekdays (except Wednesdays) and was established in 2000 by a local art teacher in response to problems clients had experienced in accessing local art classes.</p> <p>This Equality Impact Assessment is being carried out as part of a wider review of commissioning arrangements for joint mental health services. The need for that review was highlighted in a local Mental Health Needs Assessment commissioned by Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders and carried out by 'Figure 8' Consultancy Services over 2014. This noted that historic commissioning decisions had not always been made on good evidence of cost effectiveness and quality. Recommendations included a need for commissioners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the pattern of service provision and contracting to ensure that it strengthens the co-ordination of care and effective partnership working and communication; • Consideration needs to be given to conducting ongoing, consistent and equitable evaluation of all mental health services across the Borders

In March 2017 the Mental Health Board identified a need to review Artbeat in view of financial pressures in both the MH & LD budgets. It also felt that while the service is well used, it had been difficult to ascertain outcomes for clients and value for money from regular contract monitoring. An extension to the contract would allow evaluation work to be completed and a decision to be made regarding the viability of the service in the current financial pressures (Ref: Social Work Non-Competitive Action 06/07/17). Funding over 2016/17: Mental Health (£12,500) and Learning Disability (£10,180). Clients referred by statutory Mental Health or Learning Disability services pay a contribution towards their attendance of £2 (subsidised by £8 from service funding), whilst others choosing to attend pay the full cost of £10 per session (a session is 2 hours).

Equality Impact Assessment Objectives

Key objectives of this review are by end January 2018 to:

1. Assess the impact that this service has had on clients, and the potential impact and risks for key stakeholders if funding from statutory services is not to be continued:
 - a. For clients and carers (e.g. accessibility of services to vulnerable adults); nature and quality of services compared to alternative sources of support);
 - b. For the provider – paid staff and volunteers (unemployment, anxiety and distress, loss of skills and experience); and
 - c. For funders/other stakeholders (e.g. increased demand for other Mental Health services leading to longer waiting lists/higher costs, reputational damage).
2. Consider mitigating factors and actions should funding be discontinued
3. Present the EIA Stage 3 summary to the Mental Health Board to inform a review of funding for the current contract for creative activities for adults with mental health problems to ensure cost-effectiveness.

Overview of 2017

Over the last year Artbeat has been successful in securing a revenue grant from the Robertson Trust to part-fund a Project Coordinator Post for 3 years, enabling improvements to the structure and processes of the organisation. This has allowed the delivery of more tailored support and better monitoring of progress for clients, increased availability of services, strengthening of the service user's voice, and more robust strategic and operational planning.

No external evaluations have been carried out, but assessment questionnaires and evaluations carried out by Artbeat in March 2016 revealed just how much individuals benefitted from attending the service (full feedback is provided in the Evidence log).

EIA consultation with stakeholders

Over the course of three month (Oct 17 – Jan 18) consultation with stakeholders in Stage2 of this EIA sought to assess:

- impact of the service, and if funding were to be withdrawn
- what alternative sources of support clients might access, and
- whether other developments (in mental health services) might mitigate this impact.

Impact of service

A survey of carers and volunteer staff showed that the service is highly valued, with benefits for themselves as well as the person they support, and often leading to better relationships. Carers and all stakeholders participating in the consultation felt that Artbeat was welcoming and inclusive, helping to reduce isolation and create a sense of purpose and belonging. Other benefits consistently reported were the ‘extremely positive impact on mental health’ and well-being (such as reduced anxieties, improved confidence and self-esteem) and improvements in social-skills. Artbeat offers people the opportunity to explore and develop their creative skills in a supportive environment, as well as involvement in exhibitions and fundraising activities in the local community.

Stakeholder consultation showed Mental Health (MH), Learning Disability (LD) and Local Area Co-ordinating (LAC) services concurred with the benefits described by clients and carers, with MH services also noting that Artbeat had an ‘extremely positive’ impact on their own service by offering clients community/social support.

The Gala Resource Centre (GRC) commented that they do make some referrals to Artbeat for clients living in the Hawick area, but sometimes find it difficult to get them in due to limited capacity.

LD/LAC services regard Artbeat ‘as a place of sanctuary and social contact for many isolated individuals, including many who previously believed that they were not artistic. It has a strong sense of community and ownership. “The quality of the artwork and personal tuition is remarkable. We have a good working relationship with Artbeat; in particular they are very good at alerting us to welfare and health concerns of clients and other vulnerable people.”

LD/LAC staff commented that they tended to view Artbeat as a community resource rather than a day service (although Artbeat is not operating as an open access service for anyone in the community). LD consider there to be an equity issue in that it is only really accessible to people in the central Borders, although they concede that this is the case for many services operating from central or satellite bases in certain towns only.

Impact of funding cuts and alternative sources of support

A cut in Council funding could affect availability of this service for clients referred via mental health and learning disability services who benefit from subsidised places unless an alternative funding model was developed by Artbeat. Carers and volunteer staff were concerned that there were little or no viable alternatives if Artbeat were no longer available, and that the person they support would 'just sit at home' and suffer a decline in their emotional health and social connectedness. "There is nothing like Artbeat - absolutely nothing!"

Mental Health services felt that any loss of this service would be 'disastrous' resulting in a lack of onward steps for patients (potentially delaying discharge out of MH services).

LD/LAC services identified possible alternative activities for clients/carers including art classes in Jedburgh ('All Awards'), and some classes in Hawick (church based craft sessions), with some movement of students between these and Artbeat. However, they also noted that these groups tend to be heavily over-subscribed, making it difficult to get clients into them, and have not been as welcoming as they had hoped. Although they seek to support and address this, it is a "fine balancing act" so as to avoid overwhelming community groups. The local college has now closed.

Given the stated benefits of Artbeat, it is evident that any loss of service would be detrimental to clients, carers, volunteers and statutory services which refer into it (mental health, learning disability and the LAC service), and it has been difficult to identify any real alternative sources of comparable support that these clients can access.

Summary

Benefits of the service: All stakeholders participating in the consultation agree that Artbeat is an important resource in supporting people who are socially excluded by reason of mental illness and/or learning disability, poverty and isolation. Its' inclusive culture is benefiting service users and carers, some of whom go on to become volunteers, by helping to reduce isolation and create a sense of purpose and belonging whilst developing creative skills. Other benefits expressed by stakeholders include 'extremely positive impact on mental health' and well-being (such as reduced anxieties, improved confidence and self-esteem) and improvements in social-skills.

3.4

Impact Assessment

Use the information you have gathered during the development of your proposal to identify the anticipated impacts of your proposal against the three arms of the Equality Duty.

Equality Characteristic	Impact			Description	Mitigation & Recommendations
	No Impact	Positive Impact	Negative Impact		
Disability e.g. Effects on people with mental, physical, sensory impairment, learning disability, visible/invisible, progressive or recurring			x	<p>Those with mental illness and/or learning disabilities are known to experience poorer health outcomes with many experiencing co-occurring physical conditions or disabilities. The Scottish Borders Integration Strategic Plan for 2016-2019 identified the following in terms of prevalence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health (each year, around one in four adults will experience at least one diagnosable mental health problem) • Learning Disabilities - we have at least 555 people aged 16+ in our population who have a learning disability); • Physical Disabilities (according to the Scotland Census 2011, 6,995 people in Scottish Borders live with a physical disability); • Sensory Impairment (an estimated 500 people in our population are blind or have severe sight loss, whilst an estimated 1,800 have severe or profound hearing loss). <p><u>Consideration:</u> Artbeat caters for the needs of clients with mental illness, learning and/or physical disabilities and employs an explicitly welcoming and inclusive approach which is much valued by service users and carers. The service enables clients to develop creative, personal and social skills that benefit their mental health and well-being. Additionally, it is based on the</p>	

					ground floor, has accessible toilet facilities, and can offer support from trained and/or experienced staff and volunteers. A cut in funding could affect availability of this service for these groups if alternative sources of funding were not identified by Artbeat.	
	Carers (those who have caring responsibilities for someone with an equality Characteristic)			x	<p>There is an identified link between deprivation and providing care: 46% of unpaid carers living in the most deprived areas of the Borders provide 35 or more hours of care per week, compared with 22% of carers living in the least deprived areas (Scottish Borders Health & Social Care Integration Strategic Plan for 2016-2019). Providing care for someone else is known to affect the carer's own health, with 42% of carers having one or more long-term conditions or health problems.</p> <p>Some clients accessing Artbeat are accompanied by carers, or the carers are able to have some respite whilst the client is at the service. Some carers attend for their own respite. A cut in funding could affect availability of this service for these carers if alternative sources of funding were not identified by Artbeat.</p>	
	Poverty (people who are on a low income including benefits claimants, people experiencing fuel poverty, isolated rural communities etc)			x	<p>Deprivation has a big effect on the need for, and use of, health and social care services. Although more evident in some areas, deprivation is not confined by geography and also applies to vulnerable groups who may live in deprived circumstances, such as homeless people, offenders, and those with mental illness and/or learning disabilities. People with mental health problems and/or learning disabilities have been identified as a priority group in the Scottish Borders Reducing Inequalities Strategy (2016).</p> <p>Clients referred by statutory services pay a contribution towards their attendance of £2, whilst others choosing to attend pay the full cost of £10 per session (a session is 2 hours).</p>	

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3.5	Relevance to the Equality Duty in Summary:	
	What impact will your proposal have on the following :	
	Equality Duty	Reasoning:
	Elimination of discrimination (both direct & indirect), victimisation and harassment.	Yes – Artbeat challenges stigma and reduces barriers to accessing creative activities for people with mental illness/learning disabilities. A cut in funding could increase discrimination against these groups unless alternative sources of funding are identified by Artbeat.
	Promotion of equality of opportunity	Yes – Artbeat increases opportunities for people with mental illness/learning disabilities by reducing barriers and increasing access to creative activities. A cut in funding could hinder the promotion of equal opportunities for these groups.
	Foster good relations	Yes –A cut in funding for Artbeat has the potential to hinder relationships with people with mental illness/learning disabilities.

3.6

Recommendations & Mitigation

Characteristic	Mitigation/Recommendation	Approved Yes/No
Disability, carers, poverty	<p>This EIA considers the impact of any funding cuts to this service in isolation from the overall context of developments in mental health services.</p> <p>Mitigation</p> <p>There are many developments across health and social care services generally, as well as within services specifically for those with Mental Health problems and/or Learning Disabilities. These developments aim to support earlier and more effective interventions, more integrated, recovery-orientated care closer to home, and the promotion of self-management and peer support. It is envisaged that these developments will provide greater opportunities for this client group and those caring for them, by increasing access to a broader range of services for those living across the Borders.</p> <p>Specifically within the Learning Disability Service there is a well established network of Local Area Coordinators. The Mental health Service has also recently established a Local Area Coordinator service. Both services will be able to support existing attendees to identify and access any alternative activities that may be available. In addition the Learning Disability service has invested in employing 2 Volunteer coordinators who are looking at how we can increase the volunteering opportunities across the Borders and Project Search is running its second year supporting people into employment.</p> <p>Self Directed Support (SDS) allows individuals who have eligible needs to use their SDS personal budget to purchase services to meet their identified needs. When reviewing or creating their Support Plans people who currently attend Artbeat/new customers with eligible needs could choose to use their available budget to purchase sessions such as those available at Artbeat. This would both allow individuals with the greatest need to continue attending Artbeat and for Artbeat to increase its income and financial sustainability.</p> <p>Possible options might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A gradual reduction of funding? • Support to identify other sources of funding? 	Yes

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To maintain funding for a short term 6 month period allowing Artbeat to look at other sources of funding and/or combining with other local services. <p>Recommendation The recommendation is to maintain funding for a 6 month period allowing Artbeat to look at other sources of funding and to amend business model.</p>	
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Signed Off (Sign off <u>must</u> be completed by Service Manager or Director)			
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Post:	General manager	Date:	29 th March 2018

EIA Completed By			
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