

WOMEN'S BREAKOUT MERGER

Some Questions and Answers

When will the merger take place?

The merger completion date is 28 July 2017

How will the merger be of benefit to the women's sector?

By combining the expertise within Clinks and the work achieved by WB over the last few years the merger will aim for:

- the voice of women impacted on or by the criminal justice system to continue to be heard where decisions are made and influence policy and practice
- the experiences and voice of those who work with women in the criminal justice system to influence and shape future policy and practice
- opportunities to advance the needs of women in the criminal justice system and those voluntary organisations best placed to support them to be optimised

Will the merger affect the geographical coverage provided?

Clinks works throughout England and Wales

How will Clinks work with the existing Women's Breakout members?

Once funding is in place, the aim is for Clinks to extend its support for the women's sector. We will work alongside the members of Women's Breakout to find out what they need and how we can support them. Any Women's Breakout members who are eligible to join Clinks but are not currently in membership will receive one year's free membership in the relevant category for one year at the time of merger.

What assurance is there that the merger will provide a sound basis for future operations?

Clinks is fully committed to keeping a strategic focus in policy and practice development on achieving the very best outcomes for women who come into contact with the criminal justice system and to supporting the voluntary organisations across England and Wales who are focussed on supporting them.

Why have we chosen to merge with Clinks?

We know from our members that the single most important thing that they value from Women's Breakout has been its position in strategic influencing, and then communicating that strategic environment to our membership. After careful consideration of a number of infrastructure organisations we have decided that Clinks is best positioned to take forward this aspect of our work, not least because they currently hold a place on the Female Offenders Advisory Board and also convene the Third Sector Reducing Reoffending Advisory Group, but also because of the wide reach of their communications.

Why now?

Funding has been increasingly difficult to secure over the last two years, and the Women's Breakout Board felt that there were no viable options to secure funding to continue the work past the end of

the current financial year. They concluded that it was better to manage a transfer of the work while we still had a small amount of funding to support the transfer, rather than risk running out of funding and losing important aspects of the work.

What will happen to Women's Breakout's staff?

Clinks will not be taking over sufficient income in the merger to continue to employ the current staff under the new arrangement and so both staff posts will be made redundant.

How will Clinks fund Women's Breakout?

They will be seeking funding to establish Women's Breakout as a network within the organisation that has a full cost recovery model. However, initially they will be seeking funding to support the settling in of the Women's Breakout Network into Clinks.

What will happen to the Social Impact Bond?

Over the last three years Women's Breakout has been supporting the demonstration of the potential to use Social Impact Bond funding to support work with vulnerable women. In the last twelve months we have focussed our energies in two particular areas – Gloucester and Newcastle – and we have supported developing the relationship between the two member organisations (Changing Lives and Nelson Trust) and their local commissioners. As the work has become entirely locally focused, Women's Breakout is no longer involved and we have successfully transferred the leadership to the local leads.

Will there be separate governance for Women's Breakout within Clinks?

No, because Women's Breakout will be managed as an integral part of Clinks. In order to aid transition the Board of Trustees of Clinks will co-opt someone onto the Board with expertise and knowledge of the voluntary sector working with women in the criminal justice system and of Women's Breakout.

What happens to the WB website, data, newsletter and twitter?

All appropriate data will be transferred to Clinks by end of July; and Clinks will aim to maintain the Women's Breakout website until at least end of March 2018. There will not be a Women's Breakout newsletter and content for women's organisations will be embedded within Light Lunch and Clinks' policy and other bulletins. Clinks' communications team will review the value of maintaining separate social media accounts to members.

What happens to the Intellectual Property Rights?

Intellectual property (the Quality Standards, work on the Social Impact Bond etc.) will transfer to Clinks. Clinks does not run quality assessment programmes but would continue to make the information available to voluntary organisations working with women.

Were there any other options?

Due to financial constraints Women's Breakout would have had to close.

Thanks to Clinks we are able to hand over the legacy and any future opportunities to an organisation who shares our values and who are committed to achieving real change in the way that women are supported to have the futures they deserve.

Roma Hooper, Chair of the Women's Breakout Board of Trustees

12 June 2017