Equality Plan
2019-2023

Northern Ireland
Policing**Board**

EQUALITY ACTION PLAN APRIL 2019- MARCH 2023

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Policing Board (the Board) is a designated public authority and as such is required to comply with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 requires the Board to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across 9 categories as outlined in the Act.

The Board is fully committed to the discharge of its Section 75 obligations.

The Board works with our communities and partners to deliver our statutory duties and responsibilities e.g. Department of Justice, the PSNI and provides input to the work of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) in seeking to tackle inequalities and build good relations between persons of differing beliefs, political opinion and racial groups.

This Equality Action Plan was formulated as a result of the Board undertaking an 'Audit of Inequalities'. It forms an Appendix to the Board's Equality Scheme. The Board wishes to acknowledge the advice and guidance provided by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

Set out below is information relating to the role of the Board, the organisational structure and the draft Action Plan in accordance with the Equality Scheme. To contact the Policing Board about this Action Plan, or if you require the Plan in an alternative format (such as in large print or Braille, on an audio cassette, easy read, or disc) you can write to us, email us, or call us.

To write:
Equality Officer
Northern Ireland Policing Board
Waterside Tower
31 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast BT1 3BG

To email:
infomation@nipolicingboard.org.uk

To call us:
028 90 408 500

Background to the Northern Ireland Policing Board

The Policing Board was established on 4 November 2001. The Board is responsible for the independent oversight of the PSNI. Its membership comprises 19 members; ten political members and 9 independent members. Further information on the legislative remit, responsibilities and work of the Board can be accessed on the Board's website at www.nipolicingboard.org.uk.

Overview of the Northern Ireland Policing Board as an Organisation

The Chief Executive is head of the Board's staff and oversees four Directorates: Performance Directorate; Partnership Directorate; Resources Directorate; and Police Administration Directorate. Below is a summary of the work undertaken by the Branches within each Directorate.

Performance Directorate

Performance Directorate is responsible for supporting the Board's work in setting priorities for policing through the annual policing plan, and supporting the work of the Board's Committees in monitoring PSNI performance against these priorities. The Directorate also leads on the Board's work with regard to monitoring and reporting on PSNI compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and oversight of the operation of the National Crime Agency in Northern Ireland.

The Directorate comprises 2 Branches:-

Police Performance Monitoring Branch Role:

- Development of the Annual Policing / Performance Plan and monitoring of police performance
- Monitoring and assessing PSNI's progress towards achieving the measures in the Annual Policing Plan

Police Human Rights and Professional Standards Branch Role:

- Monitoring PSNI compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and producing an annual assessment of PSNI's performance
- Assessing the effectiveness of the PSNI Code of Ethics and monitoring trends and patterns in complaints against police
- Leading on the Board's oversight responsibilities with regard to the operation of the National Crime Agency (NCA) in Northern Ireland

Partnership Directorate

Partnership role is to support the Board to fulfil its responsibilities for partnership working, including: Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs); oversight of the PSNI Policing with the Community, strategic engagement and community consultation.

The Directorate comprises 3 Branches:

Partnership Branch Role:

- Developing, promoting, supporting and monitoring the effectiveness of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs)
- Managing and overseeing the process for the recruitment of Independent Members of the PCSPs

Engagement Branch Role:

- Develop, implement and monitor an Engagement Strategy for the Board that supports confidence and co-operation of the public with the police
- Develop, implement and monitor activities which secure community involvement in policing, including community consultation activities
- Monitor and promote the Independent Custody Visitors (ICV) Scheme and the Independent Community Observer (ICO) Scheme

Communications Branch Role:

- Communicating information on the role and work of the Board through a range of channels
- Improving public awareness on policing issues
- Publishing the Board's Publication Scheme and respond to Freedom of Information and Data Protection Act requests

Resources Directorate

The Resources Directorate work focuses on supporting the work of the Resources and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committees including risk management, control and governance, accounting and finances and audit strategies. It also supports these committees with monitoring police performance against measures specific to the committees and with monitoring PSNI's Estates Strategy and trends and patterns in the recruitment of PSNI officers and staff.

The directorate comprise of 2 Branches:

Finance & IT Branch Role:

- Securing and managing funding for the Board and implementing systems for procurement and financial management

- Monitoring PSNI and NIPB expenditure to ensure best use of resources to meet the needs of the public
- Discharging the Board's responsibilities for the police estate and managing the Board's IT contract
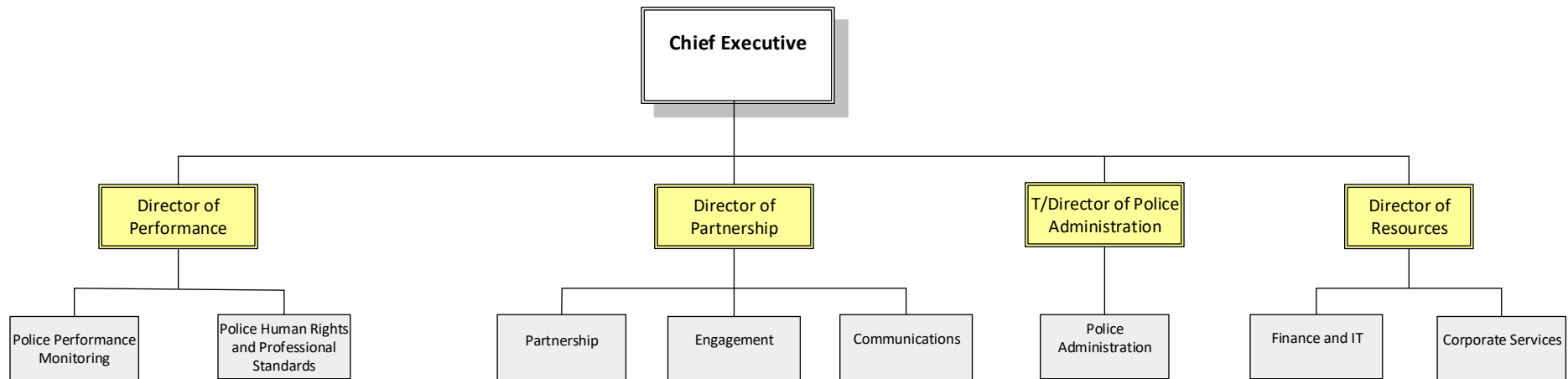
Corporate Services Branch Role:

- Developing and monitoring the Board's Corporate and Business Plans, Continuous Improvement Plans and implementing systems for Risk Management, Corporate Governance and Internal Audit
- Managing the Board's HR function and premises
- Leading the process to appoint senior officers, PSNI secondments and overseeing police pay allowances and conditions of service with the exception of senior police service personnel
- To oversee the Board's responsibilities in relation to Equality, Diversity and Good Relations

Police Administration Directorate

The Police Administration Directorate work focuses on the appointment of the Occupational Health Practitioners to act as the Selected Medical Practitioners whose role it is to conduct all medical assessments in respect of ill health and injury on duty award applications. It also administers Injury on Duty and medical retirement applications. It acts as the Scheme Manager for police pensions and develops professional working relationships with key stakeholders such as the Police Federation of Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Retired Police Officers Association.

NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD ORGANISATION CHART

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Director of Performance		Director of Partnership			T/Director of Police Administration	Director of Resources	
Police Performance Monitoring	Police Human Rights and Professional Standards	Partnership	Engagement	Communications	Police Administration	Finance and IT	Corporate Services

OBJECTIVE 1: TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MEASURES TAKEN TO SECURE THAT THE PSNI WORKFORCE IS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward?
Ensure that the Police Service is representative of the community it serves.	1. Monitor PSNI recruitment to ensure the wide promotion of job opportunities to under-represented groups. 2. Monitor staff opportunities within the PSNI particularly under-represented groups	• Monitor the number of applications received and appointments made by the Board and the PSNI from under represented S75 groups for civilian and officer posts. • Monitor the implementation of actions taken by PSNI to address issues contained in the Barriers to recruitment research. • Monitor PSNI efforts with regard to retention, promotion and representation across departments and branches.	Autumn 2019 onwards	Resources Directorate Resources Directorate
To ensure that the principles of merit, fairness and openness inform the appointment of PSNI Chief Officers and Senior Staff Equivalents.	1. Ensure the design and delivery of all PSNI Chief Officer and Senior Staff recruitment competitions are in line with NIPB Guidance. Where appropriate, steps such as engaging an Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Advisor may be considered.	The principles of merit, fairness and openness will be supported through: • Ensuring all recruitment material is consistent with good practice guidelines and embedded within the PSNI Code of Ethics • Ensure that candidates are assessed against the key values and competencies of the role. • Increasing the size and diversity of the candidate pool in line with the essential/ desirable criteria for the	Autumn 2019- 2020 Senior Appointments	Resources Directorate

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward?
		posts. • Ensuring a positive/ affirmative approach within the 'welcome statement' to candidates.		Resources Directorate
To ensure that, for Senior Officer Appointments the composition of recruitment panels is balanced	1. Ensure the recruitment panel receives relevant equality training as part of their recruitment training	• Ensure there is a balance of gender and community background on every panel and aim for balance in other S75 areas where possible.	2019 onwards (Senior Posts)	Resources Directorate
To ensure reporting mechanisms are in place for PSNI to update the Board on how they are dealing with individual complaints received from staff regarding age, gender, sexual orientation, race etc.	2. Resources Committee receiving regular briefings from PSNI head of HR to include briefings on the implementation of the PSNI Equality, Diversity and Good Relations Strategy.	• Monitor the outcome of complaints provided by the PSNI through the HR dashboard and remedial action taken and apply lessons learned • Explore opportunities to work with the PSNI Cultural, Ethics and Diversity Board. • To explore other opportunities to monitor PSNI performance in equality and diversity.	2019-2023	Resources Directorate

OBJECTIVE 2: TO CREATE A CULTURE OF INCLUSION, RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING WITHIN OUR WORKFORCE

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward?
To ensure staff and Board members understand S75 and the different employment / HR issues arising for S75 groups	1. Develop a meaningful training programme (s) for both staff and Board members and review each year	• Include a section on the staff survey on staffs' understanding of equality issues • Carry out a Board Skills Audit • Provide evidence in the annual report to the Equality Commission of the number of staff and Board members completing training programmes	2019-2023	Resources Directorate
To liaise with HR Connect to ensure recruitment campaigns are as accessible as possible to under-represented groups and are equality proofed	1. Ensure job advertising is clear and widely distributed particularly among under-represented groups outlining flexible working arrangements 2. Senior Management Team to continue to explore options for flexible working	• Consider a manageable working group from the different S75 groups to consult annually • Work with Communications on the distribution of information on recruitment to specific groups and organisations • Review annually how staff across the organisation are availing of flexible working	Ongoing	Resources Directorate
To ensure that recruitment policies and procedures are in line with legislation	1. Carry out an audit of NIPB HR policies to ensure they are compatible with current	• Develop a schedule for reviewing individual policies on a rolling basis.	Ongoing	Resources Directorate

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward?
and best practice	legislation and best practice 2. Take appropriate action to ensure staff are aware of current policies and any changes	• Create a process on the intranet for staff to easily access information on changes to NICS HR policies		
To create opportunities to enhance staff cohesion and morale and health and well-being through the 'Be Yourself' Group (BU)	1. Senior Management Team (SMT) to support the work of the BU group 2. Production of an annual programme of events and activities for the Group 3. Update on activities at Staff Team Briefing 4. Membership of the group to include representation from all grades within the organisation as far as practicable.	• Monitor the number of staff availing of the BU activities • Monitor staff attitudes through the staff survey results • SMT taking part in BU group activities	Ongoing	BU Group

OBJECTIVE 3: TO ENGAGE WITH STAFF TO ENSURE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward
To further develop our approach to Reward and Recognition	1. To publicise across the organisation the guidance applied when using the Special Bonus Scheme 2. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be nominated for an award	• Monitor all payments made against staff grades, age, gender and disability • Review the policy on a rolling basis to ensure it complies with the NIPB equality scheme • Organise a staff recognition event for all staff	Ongoing	Chief Executive
To ensure staff are consulted in the development of any new accommodation plan	1. With the view to any new accommodation plan to engage with staff from across the organisation to ensure any special needs are considered	• Directorate staff meetings held to discuss impacts on staff of any potential new accommodation	Ongoing	Resources Director

OBJECTIVE 4: TO IMPLEMENT A RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN FOR NEW PCSP INDEPENDENT MEMBERS

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward?
In the recruitment campaign for Independent Members of the PCSPs ensure that the widest possible range of candidates are encouraged to apply, and that equality of opportunity is promoted between section 75 groups.	1. Carry out Equality Screening on the process 2. Ensure that the Communications Strategy utilises a blended approach to publicity and advertising through social media platforms, local and regional press and engagement events to ensure the widest reach across Northern Ireland and offer a register of interest to potential applicants 3. Ensure the process offers a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) and provides applicants with the opportunity to record any special interview arrangements required	• Monitor Equality Screening mitigation measures to ensure adherence • Request applicants indicate where they heard about the recruitment to gauge effectiveness of measures taken. Record social media uptake statistics and report all to the Partnership Committee • Record and report the use of the GIS • Report the number of potential applicants on the register of interest • Record all Equal Opportunities data provided by applicants in a confidential database to ascertain uptake by Section 75 groupings	2019-2020	Partnership Branch

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward?
	4. Offer bespoke events to stakeholders including those that represent Section 75 groupings.			

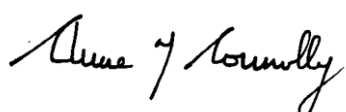## OBJECTIVE 5: TO IMPLEMENT A RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward?
To ensure any volunteer recruitment campaigns (most notably in relation to Independent Custody Visiting and Independent Community Observers) are open to all members of the public, including the Section 75 groupings	1. Carry out equality screening on the process 2. Ensure the communications plan uses a variety of media forms to support a wide reaching audience 3. Offer a registration of interest option in the lead up to the open application process 4. Ensure the process for recruitment of volunteers includes a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) 5. Offer provision of reasonable adjustments for applicants at all stages 6. Identify potential under-representation within volunteer scheme and address accordingly	• Monitor equality screening mitigation measures to ensure compliance • Collect applicant's monitoring information and how they heard about the opportunity in order to inform future recruitment • Monitor campaigns and report to the Partnership Committee within post-campaign paper • Record the number of potential applicants on the registration of interest • Record the number of GIS offered / accepted • Ensure compliance with reasonable adjustments • Evidence additional targeted awareness raising communications / engagement	2019-2023	Engagement Branch

OBJECTIVE 6: TO DETERMINE AND REVISE OBJECTIVES FOR POLICING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward?
Ensure views of S75 groups are obtained in the development and review of the Policing and Performance Plan for PSNI	1. Engage with key stakeholders to ascertain the direct experience of the user from contact with the PSNI	• Record the experiences described by direct service users to inform the Policing and Performance Plan	Ongoing	Police Performance Monitoring Branch

OBJECTIVE 7: TO BE VISIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE TO THE PUBLIC ABOUT WHAT WE DO AND EXPLAIN OUR ACTIONS AND DECISIONS CLEARLY.

What do we want to do?	What do we need to do to achieve this?	How will we measure it?	Timescale?	Responsible for taking forward?
Supporting the Board with its statutory responsibilities by ensuring that the Board's public information and materials are accessible to all Develop and deliver an engagement strategy that supports S75 groups / individual involvement We will ensure that all events and engagement opportunities hosted / led by the Board are open and accessible to all	1. Consultation with S75 groups on what their needs are when providing information 2. Ensure published information adheres to the plain English principles 3. Documentation made available in alternative formats on request. 4. Corporate guidelines in place to remind staff for communication activities and font size 5. Equality Screen applicable processes 6. Request information from event / engagement attendees (if possible) on reasonable adjustment requirements and meet accordingly.	• Compliance with requests, e.g. reasonable adjustments, translation, interpretation • Responses received on behalf of S75 groups / individuals • Adherence to outcome of equality screening as necessary	2019-2023	Partnership Directorate

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Prof Anne Connolly OBE BA MA MBA

Chairperson Northern Ireland Policing Board

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Amanda Stewart

Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Policing Board