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HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISOR

INFORMATION BOOKLET
2025

This Information Booklet has been produced as a guide to help you provide the relevant information when applying for the role of Human Rights Advisor to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. This document is a memorandum and should not be taken as constituting conditions of engagement.

The qualities, skills and aptitudes required and details of how to complete the application process are set out within this booklet. It is recommended that you read this information carefully before applying. This information can be requested in alternative formats by contacting recruit@headstogether.com or telephone 028 9042 4030.

For further information and an application form please contact recruit@headstogether.com quoting reference NIPB HRA.

Completed applications must be received by Headstogether Consulting Ltd by no later than 12 noon on Monday 12th May 2025.

Please return completed application forms by email to:

Ruth Abraham

HR Consultant

Headstogether Consulting Ltd

2-4 Grays Lane

Hollywood

County Down

BT18 9AU



recruit@headstogether.com

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the completed application is received on time. Late information unfortunately cannot be considered.

*Please **do not** email applications directly to the Policing Board.*

FOREWORD

Thank you for your interest in the position of Human Rights Advisor to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

The Board's job is to deliver effective independent oversight of policing and to make sure that the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) delivers a professional service for the community. Having a rights based approach to policing is an important element of securing and building public confidence in the PSNI. It protects the rights of the public and police officers alike and provides a decision-making framework for officers to work within. The Board is responsible for oversight of the work of the PSNI. We are looking for a Human Rights Advisor with the skills and experience to assist the Board in meeting its legislative duties in this area.

This is a highly challenging independent role which aims to support Members of the Board in holding the PSNI to account through the Chief Constable. The successful applicant will primarily be responsible for carrying out duties in connection with monitoring the compliance of the PSNI with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Please take the time to thoroughly read the Information Booklet before applying. If you think you have the skills, experience and commitment for this contracted role, we would welcome your application.

Thank you again for your interest in this position.

Kate Lavery

Chair of the Panel

Northern Ireland Policing Board

BACKGROUND TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

The Board was established on the 4 November 2001 following a recommendation in the Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, more commonly known as the Patten Report.

The Board has 19 Members in total, including the Chair and Vice Chair. Ten are Political Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly and nine are Independent Members. The current Chair is Mukesh Sharma and the Vice Chair is Brendan Mullan.

WHAT WE DO

The Board's key statutory responsibility is to hold the Chief Constable to account for his actions and those of the PSNI more generally. It does this principally through monthly meetings of the Board and through the scrutiny of the Board's Committees. There is a significant and complex legislative framework based largely on the Police (Northern Ireland) Acts 1998, 2000 and 2003 which determines the responsibilities of the Board, both in respect of the PSNI and those directly applicable to the Board. Key to these responsibilities is a duty to secure the maintenance of an effective and efficient police service.

The Board undertakes these duties by supporting the PSNI in securing the budget for policing and monitoring its expenditure; monitoring PSNI performance against the Policing Plan; monitoring compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998; securing continuous improvement and monitoring the use of resources. The Board is responsible for appointing PSNI Senior Officers and Senior Civilian equivalents and is also the pensions administrator for the PSNI. The Board has recently published a new Policing Plan for the 2025 to 2030 period.

Further information on the roles and responsibilities of the Northern Ireland Policing Board is available via the Policing Board's website www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING ROLE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

The Northern Ireland Policing Board has an obligation, under section 3(3)(b)(ii) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, to monitor the performance of the PSNI in complying with the Human Rights Act 1998. The origin of this statutory requirement can be found in the Patten report, specifically recommendation seven which states that *“the performance of the police service as a whole in respect of human rights, as in other aspects, should be closely monitored by the Board.”*

HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING FRAMEWORK

A human rights monitoring framework is in place which sets out in detail the standards against which the performance of the police in complying with the Human Rights Act 1998 is monitored by the Board. A copy of the framework is available at:

www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/files/nipolicingboard/2023-04/human-rights-monitoring-framework.pdf

REPORTING ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING WORK

A Human Rights Annual Report assesses performance against a monitoring framework and is supplemented by thematic reviews. These reports are drafted by the Human Rights Advisor, with support from Board staff and discussed and approved by the Board prior to publication.

Where areas for improvement are identified, recommendations are made. The Board engages with the PSNI on its acceptance of the recommendations and reports publicly on the PSNI's implementation of the recommendations either in subsequent Human Rights Annual Reports or in follow up reports to the thematic reviews. Copies of recent Human Rights Reports can be found on the Board's website under the publications section - www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

MAIN TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT - HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISOR

The position of Human Rights Advisor to the Board is an independent role and is offered on a contract for services basis. The Human Rights Advisor will not be an employee of the Board, nor does any aspect of the contract for services constitute employee or worker status.

A detailed set of conditions of contract will be issued to the successful contractor. However, the main terms and conditions are set out below.

MAXIMUM ALLOCATION OF WORKING DAYS

The budget for this role allows for a **maximum** of 120 working days per annum. A programme of work will be agreed with the Board at the start of each financial year, subject to this maximum allowance available. The specific details of the services to be provided by the contractor remain at the sole discretion of the Board and no specific minimum or maximum number of days' work per annum is guaranteed at any stage throughout the duration of the contract.

DAILY RATE

The per diem rate for this position is £1,000. Standard mileage and reasonable travel costs will be paid in connection with the role.

LOCATION

The Human Rights Advisor will be provided with office facilities at the Board's premises for use throughout the duration of the contract.

TRAVEL

The Human Rights Advisor will be expected to travel throughout Northern Ireland on a regular basis subject to a programme of work to be agreed, and on occasion, they may be required to travel nationally and internationally.

CONTRACT DURATION

The contract is for an initial duration of three years, with the possible option of an extension for up to a further two years. Performance of the contractor will be reviewed on a regular basis. Continuation of the contract is subject to satisfactory performance reviews and subject to ongoing budgetary constraints.

REPORTING

The Human Rights Advisor will be responsible to the Chief Executive of the Board.

STANDARDS

While the Human Rights Advisor is working for the Board they will be required to:

- Ensure that their impartiality is beyond question;
- Retain proper reticence in matters of public and political controversy;
- Recognise and respect the sensitivity of some of the issues they will deal with, and some of the information they will have access to;
- Ensure the proper, effective and efficient use of public money;
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the Board;
- Have current Professional Indemnity Insurance; and
- Adhere to the Board's expected standards in relation to General Data Protection Regulations and safeguarding sensitive data.

Throughout the duration of the contract, the Human Rights Advisor must not take up any other work which is likely to give rise to a potential conflict of interest and they must not take an active part in any matter which is, or could be, one of public or political controversy whether or not it is one with which they are officially connected, during the duration of this contract term. What constitutes a conflict of interest remains at the discretion of the Board.

Any *potential* conflict of interest in relation to work already completed or that is currently underway must be declared in the application and the declaration of interests register if successful.

VETTING

The successful applicant must undertake and satisfy the requirements of Developed Vetting security clearance prior to the commencement of the contract.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

The Human Rights Advisor will primarily be responsible for carrying out duties in connection with monitoring the compliance of the PSNI with the Human Rights Act 1998.

Specifically, this is likely to include:

GENERAL

- Agreeing a three year programme of work with the Board to include attendance at agreed meetings to brief Board Members on PSNI compliance with human rights and any additional project work to be undertaken, to include thematic reviews;
- Reviewing the existing Human Rights Monitoring Framework and making any suggested amendments or improvements;
- Identifying priority areas of work in relation to the PSNI's human rights compliance to be agreed with the Board;
- Identifying, collecting and analysing key information as per the agreed programme of work to include meeting and liaison with key stakeholders including senior police officers, community representatives, criminal justice partners and other relevant partner organisations;
- Preparation of a draft Human Rights Annual Report, thematic reviews and/or other reports for publication as per the Board's instruction;
- Maintaining and enhancing a public profile as the Board's Human Rights Advisor through extensive and ongoing personal engagement with other PSNI stakeholders, NGOs and partner organisations such as, for example, the National Crime Agency;
- Providing advice and professional opinion regarding human rights compliance in relation to critical incidents on a planned and unplanned basis;
- Providing advice and professional opinion regarding human rights compliance in relation to the PSNI Code of Ethics;
- Engaging with the Government appointed Independent Reviewers;
- Responding to requests for additional legal advice in relation to human rights matters as deemed necessary by the Board; and
- Providing advice in respect of the Board's role in monitoring the exercise of the functions of the National Crime Agency in Northern Ireland.

NATIONAL SECURITY

- To monitor and report to the Board on PSNI Human Rights compliance in the area of national security, use of counter terrorism strategies, security powers and covert powers.

LEGACY/HISTORICAL INQUIRIES

- To provide human rights advice to the Board on legacy issues.

PERSON SPECIFICATION AND CRITERIA

Please note that some of the following criteria will be assessed by way of the application form and other methods during the assessment process itself or both.

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

- a) A university degree in law or in which law is a significant component¹;
- b) 5 years (within the last 10 years) practical experience² of domestic and international human rights law;
- c) Knowledge of the context of policing in Northern Ireland and/or the UK;
- d) Knowledge of current domestic and international human rights law and standards;
- e) Exceptional communication and advisory skills, both written and verbal;
- f) A track record of addressing significant critical challenge;
- g) Evidence of successfully building productive relationships through personal and ongoing engagement with a wide range of stakeholders; and
- h) Applicants will also be required to confirm they have access to a form of transport (including public transport networks) which permits them to meet the requirements of this position in full.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

- a) A professional legal qualification³;
- b) Proven experience of human rights advocacy at a domestic or international level;
- c) 7 or more years (within the last 12 years) practical experience of domestic or international human rights law; and
- d) Demonstrable experience of providing advice and guidance on criminal and/or policing policy.

Please note, applications to undertake the role as a secondment are welcome. However, please note, candidates are required to confirm their current employer have confirmed that the required period of secondment will be granted.

¹ 'significant component' is defined as more than 1/3 of the overall course content

² 'practical experience' is defined as:

- research and/or or teaching human rights law in a 3rd level academic institution; or
- experience as a professional legal representative (see below) in advising on human rights law issues, or in litigating human rights law issues at the domestic or international level (including acting as a judge); or
- experience of active engagement with human rights law in a domestic or international non-governmental or inter-governmental organisation; or
- experience of active engagement with human rights law in a domestic human rights institution (such as a human rights commission), or in the capacity of a human rights human rights advisor in a public sector position.

³ A qualification entitling the holder to practice as a legal representative or a judge before a domestic court in any country. This is typically, though not universally, designated by the title 'solicitor', 'barrister', 'advocate' or 'attorney'.

SHORTLISTING

Applicants should be aware that after a sift against the essential criteria, should it be necessary to reduce the volume of applicants further for practical reasons, then shortlisting will be carried out against the desirable criteria. In the event of a large volume of applicants who meet both the essential and the desirable criteria, the Chair of the appointment panel reserves the right to enhance the criteria for the role, as they see fit.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS - PRESENTATION AND INTERVIEW

Applicants who meet the criteria will be invited to participate in an unseen presentation exercise and an interview with the appointment panel which will consist of five Members of the Board as follows: Nuala McAllister MLA, Keith Buchanan MLA, Les Allamby (Independent Member) Kate Lavery (Independent Member and Panel Chair) and Linda Dillon MLA. An independent Human Resources consultant and a Human Rights Specialist will also be in attendance.

The appointment process will be based on the role description and essential / desirable criteria as set out in this document.

RESERVE LIST

To ensure appropriate resilience of the contract the Board reserves the right to keep a reserve list of contractors and to call off additional contractors on the basis of merit order if it deems it necessary to do so.

APPOINTMENT TIMETABLE

The timetable for the appointment process is as follows:

Closing date	12th May 2025 at 12 noon
Shortlisting	27th May 2025
Invitation to assessment process	30th May 2025
Assessment process	w/c 16th June 2025
Applicants notified of outcome	w/c 23rd June 2025

Due to the number of personnel involved in the appointment panel regrettably requests for attendance at the assessment day on alternative dates cannot be accommodated unless the reasons are to accommodate a disability.

Please note, travel costs to attend any part of the selection process will not be reimbursed by the Board.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

The Board is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified contractors irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, age, race, political opinion, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependents.

PROBITY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This engagement requires the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable or political interest which might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared.

There is always the possibility for real or perceived conflicts of interest to arise. Both are a problem, as the perceived inference of a conflict may, on occasions, be as damaging as the existence of a real conflict.

No-one should use, or give the appearance of using, this position to further their private interests. This is an area of particular importance, as it is of considerable concern to the public and receives significant media attention. It is important, therefore, that you consider your circumstances when applying for this position and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived.

COMPLAINTS

Should you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of this process you should direct your concerns in writing in the first instance to:

Ruth Abraham

HR Consultant
Headstogether Consulting Ltd
2-4 Grays Lane
Holywood
County Down
BT18 9AU



Northern Ireland Policing Board

James House, Block D
2 - 4 Cromac Avenue
The Gasworks
Belfast BT7 2JA



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