



Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report

Contact:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and Equality Scheme	Name: Telephone: Email:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan	As above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (double click to open) Name: Telephone: Email:

Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

<https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publications-search/type/equality-16>

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. M. O'Connell".

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2020 and March 2021

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

- 1** In 2020-21, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

The Northern Ireland Policing Board (**the Board**) is an independent non-departmental public body of the Department of Justice (**the DOJ**), comprising 10 political and 9 independent Members, established to ensure for all the people of Northern Ireland an effective, efficient, impartial, representative and accountable police service which will secure the confidence of the whole community by reducing crime and the fear of crime.

During the period of April 2020-March 2021 the Board maintained its commitment to its Equality Scheme and worked towards implementing the actions agreed in the new three year Equality and Disability Action Plans. However it should be noted that the Board's capacity to deliver on a number of these actions has been significantly reduced by the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic on our operational capability.

During this reporting period the following Section 75 screening exercises took place across a range of the Board's work areas. All the screening documents have been included on the Board's website

- Human Rights Monitoring Framework
- NIPB Annual Budget 2021- 22
- Police Property Fund implementation (Small Grants Scheme)
- Independent Community Observer Recruitment Campaign
- NIPB Annual Business Plan 2021-2022
- James House Relocation Project Plan
- COVID-19 Risk Assessment

The Equality Screening of these policies has ensured that there has been no adverse impact on Section 75 groups as a result of their implementation.

Throughout the year, there was ongoing recruitment of PSNI senior officers and staff. This included the appointment of 2 Assistant Chief Constables in June 2020, an appointment to the new civilian post of PSNI Chief Operating Officer

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Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

(COO) and also a competition for a PSNI Director of People & Organisational Development, another new civilian post. While the successful candidate for the COO position took up post in March 2021, the competition for PSNI Director of People and Organisational Development was launched in February 2021. Each of these competitions followed the NIPB Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers with the principles of merit, fairness and openness central to all aspects of the competition. Additionally an Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Advisor (EDHR) was appointed to ensure the merit principles were fully applied throughout the ACC appointment process. All Board Members involved as panel members in each of these competitions completed Equality training as it relates to their recruitment responsibilities.

PSNI recruitment has been ongoing throughout the year and the Board's Resources Committee has kept itself informed on the work taking place to ensure these opportunities are available to a wide cross section of our community. The Committee has received briefings on work relating to barriers to recruitment within the working class community and outreach work carried out by PSNI. In addition, during the reporting period, the Board commenced the recruitment process for a new tranche of Independent Community Observers (ICOs). These are volunteers from across Northern Ireland who help the Board deliver on its oversight responsibilities by monitoring the recruitment of Police Constables by visiting assessment centres to ensure the recruitment process is independent, transparent and fair for all applicants.

Throughout this year, work also commenced on the development and implementation of the Police Property Fund (Small Grants Scheme). Preparatory work included the completion of Equality screening. The Police Property Fund, Small Grants Scheme launched on 18 March 2021. All accessibility requirements have been considered for potential applicants and all documentation advises that alternative formats can be provided on request.

Following the PCSP Independent Member recruitment process (reported on in last year's annual return), in June 2020 the Board successfully completed the PCSP Reconstitution process with a summary of PCSP appointees being published on the Board's website, including a breakdown in terms of Gender, Community Background, Age, and Other (including Disability and Ethnic Minority). Please see the below link.

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[Appointments to Policing and Community Safety Partnerships \(PCSPs\) and District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships \(DPCSPs\) | Northern Ireland Policing Board](#)
(nipolicingboard.org.uk)

Monitoring of the NIPB and PSNI applications and appointments is ongoing through our completion and submission of the annual FET return to the Equality Commission. The Board also continues to fulfil its statutory duty under Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 by completing a tri-annual review of our workforce compositions and employment practices.

Over the course of the reporting period significant resources were deployed to ensure safe operating practices were put in place in order that Board Members and staff could continue to carry on the important oversight work of the Board notwithstanding the global COVID-19 public health emergency. Central to our response was our commitment to ensure those in Section 75 groups and those who avail of important services provided by the Board would not be disadvantaged by enacting our Business Continuity Plan. This commitment is demonstrated by the range of COVID-19 policies enacted in response to the pandemic and the relevant screening documents pertaining to these policies are now available on our website.

In order that all staff could continue to be operational throughout the pandemic, as the reporting period progressed, all Board staff were issued with laptops in order that they had the option to avail of a flexible working from home pattern should they choose to do so. Where it was necessary for staff to be in attendance on the Board's premises, mitigations were identified and put into practice. These mitigations included:

- A room occupancy risk assessment and appropriate signage informing staff of the numbers to be in each room at one time;
- Signage pertaining to social distancing/hand washing;
- Increased cleaning rotations;
- Availability of hand sanitiser at multiple points on each floor of the building;
- Where necessary, the implementation of rotas for staff attending at the Board offices;
- Touch points cleaned at regular intervals throughout the day
- Increased ventilation of all office areas;
- Staff being relocated to more spacious offices;

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- Restricted lift access with only one person to use at a time and also this facility remaining available primarily for those with a medical need to use the lift;
- Initiatives put in place to promote the importance of mental health and wellbeing.

An important service provided by the Board is the management and administration of the Injury on Duty (IOD) and Ill Health Retirement (IHR) application process for both serving and former officers. As part of this process, applicants attend our premises at Waterside Tower for assessment by qualified Occupational Health Doctors. Therefore, an essential part of the Board's COVID-19 response was the implementation of revised processes which would allow these assessments to continue and ensure these applicants were not disadvantaged by any undue delay in the assessment of their case. To that end, a detailed recovery plan was developed for Police Administration Branch (PAB-the branch with operational responsibility to deliver this function). Some elements of the PAB recovery plan included the introduction of a COVID-19 triage questionnaire to be completed 24 hours before attendance at assessment, the provision of PPE for both Doctors and attendees and comprehensive communications in a variety of formats to ensure information pertaining to the assessment process was as accessible as possible.

During the reporting period the Board undertook a Thematic Review of the Policing Response to COVID-19. Throughout the development of the Thematic Review, the Human Rights Advisor and the Human Rights and Professional Standards Branch engaged with various stakeholder groups to ensure the views of S75 groups were obtained. A Youth Champions Forum was organised to update the Policing Board with findings of young people's experiences during COVID-19. The views of various other stakeholders were also sought through engagement with the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland, The Men's Advisory Project, The Rainbow Project, We are Hourglass and during a Domestic and Sexual Abuse Independent Advisory Group, with NEXUS, Victim Support, African Women Organisation NI. The report was published in the third quarter of the reporting period and continues to be discussed with PSNI's response to the recommendations made, having been considered by the Board's Performance Committee. This will continue into the next reporting year and be discussed further in the Board's Human Rights Annual Report 2020/21.

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In addition, the Board has continued to put pressure on PSNI to rescind the fines issued following Black Lives Matter protests as part of the review of Policing response to Covid-19.

The work of the Board's wellbeing group (The BU Group) has also been more active and more important than ever during this challenging time. Since the onset of the pandemic, many initiatives such as the "BU at Home" initiative have been progressed by the group with staff wellbeing, inclusion and morale being the central focus for the group.

All papers to the Board and its Committee continue to be prefaced with a cover paper including advice from Board officials on the potential Equality consideration pertaining to the issue/decision being discussed.

During the reporting period, preparatory plans were put in place for the Board's relocation to James House within the Gasworks Complex in early 2022. A substantial part of this planning was the development of the project plan which again, has been screened to ensure no adverse impact to S75 categories. In addition, an internal working group has been established to progress this project and consideration of Equality, Disability and Diversity issues is a standing agenda item at each of these meetings. The screening report for the James House Relocation Project Plan is available on the Board's website.

During this year work was completed on the Board's new Annual Business Plan 2021-2022. This was agreed by the Board in March 2021 with one of the new actions agreed as being specifically to "*Monitor the effectiveness of measures taken to ensure that membership of the PSNI is representative of the community*". The Equality Screening document in relation to this policy document is also referenced above and available on the Board's website.

Board officials have also, during this reporting period, undertaken a review of the Board's website to ensure it meets accessibility standards and continue to make Committee agendas available in braille to our Board Member who is visually impaired. This member also has an OrCam reading device provided by the Board to increase their accessibility to Board papers and other shared information.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

The Board's Equality Action Plan 2019 – 2023 details the objectives and associated actions which demonstrate how the NIPB will promote equality of opportunity and good relations and meet its responsibilities under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998. Detailed below are examples of the progress, outcomes and impact as a result of the implementation of our Equality Action Plan throughout this reporting period.

Throughout this year, the Board's Resources Committee received regular briefings on the PSNI's officer recruitment campaign which took account of the barriers to recruitment research and modifications to ensure compliance with COVID-19 regulations. Members were advised of the PSNI's engagement and outreach initiatives to appeal to applicants across the community and the research work had been completed previously by Deloitte on the barriers to recruitment within the working class community.

In June 2021 Members received a briefing on the 2020 PSNI Recruitment Campaign Equality Analysis which detailed that a total of 6,879 applications were received (an increase of 10% on the 2018 campaign). In terms of gender 4,108 applications were received from males (57.9%) and 2,771 (40.3%) from females (this being the highest of any campaign). 4,520 (65.7%) were from a Protestant community background, 2,116 (30.8%) from a Catholic community background and 243 (3.5%) stated they were from an 'Other' background. The final merit list produced 980 candidates that were found suitable for employment as a Student Officer. 57.6% of those were male and 42.4% were female. 73.3% were from the Protestant community, 24.7% from the Catholic community and 2% were from an 'Other' background.

Another key area of focus for the Resources Committee in this area throughout the reporting period was on retention rates and promotion through the ranks of under-represented groups. Members received analysis of officers remaining in service after 1,2 and 5 years following appointment and noted the planned development of the exit interview process to inform how mitigations may be put in place to maximise retention rates across all categories. The Board continues to provide strong support for the Ethnic Minority Police Association and Women in Policing networks within the PSNI. We encourage staff associations in helping with information and advice and encourage able and talented officers to put themselves forward for promotion within the service. Board Chair meets with BAME Groups and PSNI Ethnic Minority Staff Association and WIP on a regular basis.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Members were briefed on the PSNI People Strategy, one of the main aspects of which is representativeness, and were also updated on the establishment of a Diversity and Inclusion Unit within the PSNI's HR Department including the appointment of a Head of Section 75 which had brought a renewed focus to the issue of representativeness within the PSNI. Also, the establishment and focus of a PSNI Representativeness Delivery Group which would report to the PSNI People and Culture Board to deliver on actions over the life of the PSNI People Strategy.

Throughout this year the Board undertook recruitment for a number of Senior Officer/Civilian posts.

The review of the Service Executive Team and the related ongoing recruitment of senior civilian posts provides an opportunity for the Board to consider how greater 'Diversity' might be achieved in its recruitment processes. Based on the recent competitions to appoint the Chief Constable (July 2019) the Deputy Chief Constable (January 2020), and the Chief Operating Officer (December 2020) the Board did not identify any significant concerns in relation to the PSNI's ability to attract a suitable pool of candidates for chief officer positions.

The number of applicants for the ACC competition (June 2020) however was disappointing. It should also be acknowledged that the limited numbers in the applicant pool for ACC posts is not unique to Northern Ireland and is a "systemic" issue across Police Services in the UK. Factors influencing this circumstance include: the small number of qualified potential candidates in the eligible pool, the level of competition from other Police Services who were also actively recruiting from the pool of eligible candidates, and the unique set of circumstances arising as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, we are seeing much more movement to the Garda and Police Scotland at a senior level. 2 senior officers have recently been appointed to the Garda at Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner level and to Police Scotland at DCC, ACC and Assistant Chief Officer (HR) respectively and most recently, ACC Gray was appointed as Deputy Assistant Commissioner with the London Met. PSNI are competing with national forces such as the Garda with a workforce of approx. 17,500 and Police Scotland with a workforce of 23,000 officers and staff – the second largest force in the UK after the Metropolitan Police. The Board recognise that the scale of national policing challenges in the Garda and Scotland under a single national force with multiple deputy chief constables exposes those chief officers to challenges and experience not available in PSNI.

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

It is important to acknowledge, in relation to recruiting to PSNI, that there is potential that the current threat level and ongoing challenges in respect of legacy pressures may also adversely impact the Board's prospective recruitment to senior posts within the PSNI. These challenges could be further impacted by our geographical location.

The Board is conducting further work to understand the issues, particularly those around recruitment, retention and the diversity of the candidate pool and potential barriers to attracting and retaining talent. The research has been commissioned following the July Board meeting and is expected to complete by early November 2021.

Following the extensive public consultation on the Northern Ireland Policing Plan 2020-2025 it was agreed, in line with legislation, to review the plan annually through the mechanism of a working group with key stakeholders, notably PSNI and DOJ. This has enabled a review of the Policing and Performance Plan which takes cognisance of the community. The review for 2020/21 supported wider equality by:

- maintaining the focus on those most vulnerable in society, notably victims of repeated crime, Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation and Hate Crime; Reviewing the indicator 'The level of satisfaction with the service received' and agreeing to now encompass, not only victims, but PSNI service users, thus ensure the voice of those who use the PSNI service, including S75 individuals, is monitored, scrutinised and evaluated; and
- Adding two additional Measures which focus fully on the community and offer the opportunity for community feedback. These are Measures 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 (3.1.2 - Identify and report on the neighbourhood Policing Team initiatives to address local problems and tackle local issues, including co-designed solutions in line with Neighbourhood Policing Guidelines and 3.1.3 - Assess and evaluate the impact of partnership working with local communities, including but not exclusively, in areas of high deprivation and areas that have been repeatedly victimised).

The Board's Be Yourself (BU) group has played a significant role throughout the period of the COVID-19 pandemic with initiatives to promote inclusion such as the "BU At Home" initiative – A WhatsApp group set up and available to all staff as a means of keeping in touch and checking in with staff to see if they and their family were keeping well. Other initiatives to promote awareness and

- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2020-21 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

understanding where undertaken “virtually”. These included a webinar on Menopause in the Workplace and a 4 week Confidence Course facilitated by Little Penny Thoughts. To promote participation and wellbeing, Board staff also have the option to receive a flu vaccine in October 2020, to avail of a 6 week virtual Yoga course and to participate in the Team Marathon Challenge – a walking challenge for teams of 3 to walk a marathon in a week. All of the above initiatives were well supported by staff at all grades within the organisation.

In the second half of this reporting cycle preparatory work commenced on the recruitment new Independent Community Observers (ICOs). This work included a Data Protection Impact Assessment and Equality screening of the recruitment processes, development of a communications plan (including COVID secure virtual engagements) to ensure the campaign reached the widest audience possible and the launch of the recruitment drive on 8 March 2021.

While public engagement remained challenging throughout the year, the Board considered and agreed Engagement strategy 2020-23 at its October 2020 meeting. This is now published on the Board's website and is available via the link below:

[NIPB Engagement Strategy 2020-2023 | Northern Ireland Policing Board](https://nipolicingboard.org.uk)
(nipolicingboard.org.uk)

In addition, work was completed on the review of the Board’s website to ensure it meets accessibility standards ensuring all publications on the website are now accessibility tagged meaning those with a visual impairment are now able to more readily access all information on the NIPB website.

PART A

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No (go to Q.4) ☐ Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

- 3a** With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

- 3b** What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

☐ As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

☐ As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

☐ As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details):*

☐ As a result of changes to access to information and services *(please specify and give details):*

☐ Other *(please specify and give details):*

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

- 4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- ☒ Yes, organisation wide
- ☐ Yes, some departments/jobs
- ☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- ☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Board employs all staff in Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) terms and conditions and utilises the NICS Competency Framework as the performance management tool. The framework acknowledges and requires adherence with Equality, Diversity & Good Relations duties

- 5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

- ☒ Yes, organisation wide
- ☐ Yes, some departments/jobs
- ☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- ☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

See above

- 6 In the 2020-21 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- ☐ Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- ☒ Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning

- ☐ Yes, in some departments/jobs
- ☐ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- ☐ No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2020-21 report
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Work was completed on the Board's new Annual Business Plan 2021-2022. One of the new actions agreed in the new Annual Business Plan is Monitoring the effectiveness of measures taken to ensure that membership of the PSNI is representative of the community. PSNI's performance in relation to this action will be monitored regularly as part of the NIPB Resources Committee's Programme of Work.

Throughout the development of the Annual Business Plan 2021-2022 (which can be found via the following link [Publications | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipoliceboard.org.uk\)](https://publications.nipoliceboard.org.uk/)) equality matters have been to the forefront. This is evidenced by our statement on equality within the Corporate Plan 2020-23, 'We are committed to meeting our statutory equality responsibilities in all areas of our work'. Equality screening of the new Annual Business Plan 2021-2022 was also completed.

Another area of business planning this reporting period has been preparations for NIPB's relocation to James House. Equality considerations were integrated into the operational planning for our move at an early stage by being incorporated in the agreed overarching Relocation Project Plan and also by agreeing the inclusion of Equality, Disability and Diversity Issues as a standing agenda item at each of our internal working group meetings.

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2020-21 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

Actions completed:

7

Actions ongoing:

7

Actions to commence:

2

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

The majority of the Board's actions are long-term and ongoing rather than fixed term for one year. This accounts for the number of actions which are ongoing. The actions which have not commenced are in relation to training of Board Members and Staff (owing largely to COVID-19 restrictions) and the processes for carrying out an audit of NIPB HR policies to ensure they are compatible with current legislation and best practice.

In relation to the 7 actions noted as being complete, many of these will carry forward into future annual reporting cycles owing to their ongoing nature, however they are noted here as complete as it relates to the current reporting period.

These are:

1. **To ensure that the principles of merit, fairness and openness inform the appointment of PSNI Chief Officers and Senior Staff Equivalents –** a number of successful Senior appointments have taken place this year all of which have been subject to the NIPB Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers with the principles of merit, fairness and openness central to all aspects of the recruitment process.
2. **To ensure that, for Senior Officer/Civilian Appointments the composition of the recruitment panels is balanced -** Each Appointment Panel includes both independent and political members and each of the Panels have been chaired by the Board's Chair. The composition of the Panels is monitored to ensure there is a balance in terms of gender and community background. In terms of training, the Board's Guidance for the Appointment of Chief Officers (para 4.2.2) makes it a condition of membership of an Appointment Panel, that each member attends training on the process and the criteria against which the appointment will be made. This also ensures that the Panel are provided with appropriate knowledge of effective assessment and selection practices and relevant procedures and legislation. Each Appointment Panel attended the mandatory recruitment and selection training. Additionally each individual Appointment Panel member signed a Confidentiality Agreement specific to each recruitment competition.
3. **To create opportunities to enhance staff cohesion and morale and health and well-being through the 'BE Yourself' Group (BU) –** see the information provided above in Q2 regarding the ongoing work of the Board's BU Group.
4. **To ensure staff are consulted in the development of any new accommodation plan -** Plans for the Board's relocation to James House are well advanced with a project plan having been agreed by SMT and implementation currently underway. An internal working group has been established with Equality Issues as a standing agenda item to ensure any S75 relevant issues are captured and progressed as required. Car parking provisions for staff requiring disabled access at our new building have also been progressed with James House project team and James House updates are regularly provided to staff during team briefs.
5. **To ensure any volunteer recruitment campaigns (most notably in relation to Independent Custody Visiting and Independent Community Observer) are open to all members of the public, including the Section 75 groupings -** ICO recruitment was successfully launched on 8th March 2021 and all preparatory work was undertaken in consideration of Equality issues these included Equality screening and a Communication and Engagement plan developed and approved to ensure the recruitment

campaign would reach a wide audience with specific targeted virtual engagement as limited in person engagement due to COVID-19.

6. **Ensure the views of S75 groups are obtained in the Board's report on PSNI's response to COVID-19.** – see the above commentary in Q2 on the Board's Thematic Review of the Policing Repose to COVID-19.
7. **Develop and deliver an engagement strategy that supports S75 groups / individual involvement** - The Board approved the Engagement strategy 2020-23 at its October 2020 meeting. The Strategy continues to be implemented through an Annual Programme of Work 2020/21 which includes engagements with s75 groups.

- 8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2020-21 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

N/A

- 9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2020-21 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- ☒ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- ☐ Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- ☐ Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- ☒ Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)As

- 10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: (*tick one box only*)

- ☒ All the time
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

- 11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2020-21 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

As detailed in the Board's Equality Scheme, we recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties and all consultations seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy, including representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups and any other such groups who have a legitimate interest in the matter.

A significant consultation process was carried out this year in respect of the Thematic Review of Policing Response to Covid-19. As detailed earlier in this report, consultation engagements by Board officials and the Board's Human Rights Advisor included, but was not limited to, the various stakeholder groups below to ensure the views of S75 groups were obtained and adequately represented in the final report. In June, a Youth Champions Forum was organised to update the Policing Board with findings of young people's experiences during Covid-19. This included meeting with Education Authority (Youth Service), Action for Children, Northern Ireland Youth Forum, Start360, Include Youth, Youth Work Alliance, Children's Law Centre and Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People. The views of Older People were also sought through meeting with the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland. During a Domestic and Sexual Abuse Independent Advisory Group (IAG), the Board officials spoke with NEXUS, Victim Support and African Women Organisation NI to gain the views of Women who have been impacted by domestic or sexual abuse. The Men's Advisory Project was also consulted to gain the view of male victims, as was The Rainbow Project to gain the views of the LGBTQ community and We are Hourglass for the views of Older People who are victims of domestic or sexual abuse in regards to policing and Covid-19. Consultation also took place with the Ethnic Minority Policing Association in regards to the Black Lives Matter protests and the policing of these events during Covid-19.

- 12** In the 2020-21 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- ☐ Face to face meetings
- ☐ Focus groups
- ☒ Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- ☐ Questionnaires
- ☐ Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- ☒ Internet discussions (via Zoom)
- ☐ Telephone consultations
- ☐ Other *(please specify)*:

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

Owing to the pandemic and the inability to meet in person (either one to one or in a group), consultation with all groups took place initially in writing and to follow up, via Zoom.

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

☒ Not applicable – as revised in 2019/2020

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

[\[https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publications-search/type/equality-screening-reports-18\]](https://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk/publications-search/type/equality-screening-reports-18)

- 15** Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year *(as recorded in screening reports)*:

7

- 16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2020-21:

7	Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented.
0	Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented.
0	Consultations for an EQIA alone.

- 17** Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

The main consultation completed this year was in respect of the Thematic Review of the Policing Response to COVID-19. Details of this have been outlined elsewhere in this return.

- 18** Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No concerns were raised ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 20** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2020-21 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☐ No, already taken place
☒ No, scheduled to take place at a later date ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details:

- 21** In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2020-21 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

None

- 23** Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

A table is available for all Board staff on the Board's intranet which provides relevant information/data under each of the S75 groups in order to support staff in the development and monitoring of policies.

There are further resources available on the intranet including useful links to screening information, information on the Board's Equality Scheme and links to the most recent NIPB Audits of Inequalities. All staff have been signposted to these resources.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2020-21, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

In respect of the action within our Equality Action Plan to develop a meaningful training programme(s) for both staff and Board members and review each year, while this policy and procedure was reviewed early in the reporting cycle and is in final draft form, further progress has been hampered by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. Challenges include the availability of training modules and the effectiveness of their delivery in a "virtual only" context. As such, as we move to a post-COVID environment, training and development of Board staff and Members will be a priority for the NIPB going forward.

- 25** Please provide **any examples** of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

Please refer to the response above.

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2020-21, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

Building on progress made during 2019-2020, when preliminary work was undertaken to identify accessibility issues with our website and plan for how these issues might be addressed, during this reporting period work was completed on a review of the Board's website to ensure it meets the necessary accessibility standards. This work has resulted in all publications on the Board's website now being accessibility tagged meaning those with a visual impairment are now able to more readily access all information on the NIPB website.

The Board also published an Accessibility Statement. Amongst other things, this statement provides information on how accessible the website is, advises on the different formats information can be made available in and how to request these and how to report any accessibility problems. A link to our Accessibility Statement is included below.

[Accessibility Statement | Northern Ireland Policing Board \(nipolicingboard.org.uk\)](https://nipolicingboard.org.uk/AccessibilityStatement)

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2020-21?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

N/A

Section 3: Looking Forward

- 28** Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

2023

- 29** Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (*please provide details*)

As detailed above, training for Board Members and Staff will be a focus area in the new reporting period.

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- ☐ Employment
- ☐ Goods, facilities and services
- ☐ Legislative changes
- ☒ Organisational changes/ new functions
- ☒ Nothing specific, more of the same
- ☐ Other (please state):

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

3

Fully achieved

2

Partially achieved

0

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ			
Regional ^{iv}			
Local	ACTION: We will have ensured the process for the appointment to the Volunteer Scheme has the appropriate structures in place to encourage participation by disabled people in public life.	In the last quarter of this reporting period recruitment opened for Independent Community Observers (ICOs). ICO's help the Board deliver on its oversight responsibilities by monitoring the recruitment of Police Constables.	The outcome of this recruitment campaign will be to ensure that any disabled applicants or trainers will have full accessibility arrangements put in place to enable them to fully engage in both the recruitment process and, if appointed, as an ICO.

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Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
Local			

2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
	<p>ACTION: We will have ensured the process for the appointment to the Volunteer Scheme has the appropriate structures in place to encourage participation by disabled people in public life:</p> <p>How we will do it: The provision of training for volunteers which encompasses disability elements, e.g. Equality Awareness, Mental Health Awareness The provision of training for volunteers which encompasses disability elements, e.g. Equality Awareness, Mental Health Awareness</p>	<p>Throughout this reporting period the last regional training session for “Resilience Training for Independent Custody Visitors (ICV)” was delivered.</p>	<p>The outcome of this is to ensure that ICVs are well equipped for carrying out this essential legislative function on the Board’s behalf which is to make unannounced visits to police custody suites to monitor the welfare and treatment of people in detention and the conditions of detention.</p>

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	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
2	<p>ACTION: We will have put in place programmes which will heighten staffs' awareness of disability issues.</p>	<p>Resilience and Well-Being in Uncertain Times training for staff through a webinar session.</p> <p>Regular team briefs via Zoom to keep in contact with staff and ensure they are aware of the resources available to them.</p> <p>Links set up by Managers with their individual teams to keep in touch during COVID-19.</p>	<p>This covered what the stressors staff could look out for and addressed how these could be managed robustly, while working with others to ensure success and resilience.</p> <p>Throughout the year a programme of team briefs was undertaken via Zoom to keep in touch with staff during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Awareness of mental health issues was heightened by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Board's Mental Health First Aiders making their availability known to staff; • the delivery of a presentation by Inspire which outlined the resources available to staff and highlighted the confidential nature of the service.

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2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	<p>ACTION: Policing Board staff and Members will have a positive attitude towards disabled people:</p> <p>How we will do it: We will ensure Board members and staff have the opportunity to attend relevant events to increase knowledge and awareness of disability equality legislation.</p>	<p>Appointment to the Board of a Member who is blind.</p> <p>Three Members of staff attended a 'Menopause Awareness' online session provided by Employers for Disability NI.</p>	<p>Board Members and officials have developed a heightened awareness of issues facing blind people due to the appointment of a new Board Member who is blind.</p> <p>This webinar helped attendees to gain insights into the experience of menopause and how to manage its effects in the workplace and also increase understanding about the experience of the menopause and the impact it can have both at work and at home.</p>
2	<p>ACTION: In the design of any new accommodation for NIPB the needs of disabled people will be fully considered</p> <p>How we will do it: With the view to any new accommodation plan to engage with staff from across the</p>	<p>Ongoing engagement between Board staff and James House project team</p>	<p>Disability issues considered e.g. lift access, number of parking spaces, ease of movement throughout the building, access points, furniture, design and layout.</p> <p>Confirmation received that the project team managing the development of James House are taking all steps to ensure Disability legislation is fulfilled at all stages and that the building will be accessible to all.</p>

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	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
	organisation to ensure any special needs are considered.	including consideration of Disability issues and legislation	<p>An internal NIPB working group has been established with Equality and Disability Issues as a standing agenda item to ensure any S75 relevant issues are captured, progressed and communicated as required. Car parking considerations for staff requiring disabled access at our new building have also been progressed with James House project team.</p> <p>All of the above has been done with ongoing engagement with Board staff and Members.</p>

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘**encourage others**’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1			
2			

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2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
2			

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Policing Board staff and Members will have a positive attitude towards disabled people.			While we have achieved some actions in relation to this Action/Measure (as detailed above) we have been unable to address all commitments during the reporting period owing to the COVID-19 global pandemic and as such, the action has not been fully achieved.
	We will have implemented a process to monitor and promote access to events and engagement opportunities.	Processes put in place for new blind Board Member including developing a PEEP, purchasing	The outcome of these actions has meant our blind Board Member has been able to fully engage	While we have achieved some actions in relation to this Action/Measure, We have been unable to

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	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones/ Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
		specialist equipment to assist her with reading papers, learning and listening from her about what her needs are. Also the development of access requirements, for example, follow up familiarisation visit to building , review of how papers are accessed by the Board Member and setting up of process where the Member receives copy of committee agendas in Braille ahead of the meeting.	with the work of the Board.	address several commitments relating to this action owing to the COVID-19 global pandemic and as such, the action has not been fully achieved. We expect to more fully achieve this action as we move away from solely “virtual engagements” to a more normalised working environment.

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4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1		
2		

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

Anecdotal evidence from those in receipt of training has been very positive. Feedback from staff in relation to the resources provided and engagement with management during the COVID-19 pandemic has been very good and high numbers of staff continued to engage with the Zoom team meetings despite the “home working” directive.

(b) Quantitative

Further to the above, as a result of the pandemic, no formal staff or member surveys were conducted during this reporting period.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

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Please select No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes? No

ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level