



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

**FOI Reference number: 41/2013**

**Date: 27 August 2013**

**Request:**

I am writing with reference to the implementation of the PSNI Equality, Diversity and Good Relations Strategy 2012-2017. In particular, the following objective and measure (p27 of strategy):

*Objective:* "Ensure police powers are being exercised fairly and impartially".

*Measure:* "Using data analysis we will evaluate aspects of service delivery to ensure we are treating people fairly and with respect such as...stop and search".

The PSNI made a commitment in its strategy to collect data. With regard to data on religious belief, a previous FOI request to the PSNI (FOI-2013-01878) revealed that a Working Party has been established to assess how best to comply with this undertaking in the time frame outlined. The response indicated that a self-defining tick box system will be piloted from late 2013.

**Question (1)** Has the NI Policing Board been involved in a consultation process with the PSNI Working Party referred to? If so, please provide minutes, correspondence and other relevant documents on the consultation process as far as possible. I only require information with regard to the objective and measure stated above in relation to the protected characteristics of religious belief and political opinion.

**Question 1 Answer**

The NI Policing Board has not been involved with the PSNI Working Party in a consultation format. However, a Member of the NI Policing Board sits on the PSNI's Strategic Diversity Steering Group (SDSG) in an observer capacity. The PSNI Strategic Diversity Steering Group monitors implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Good Relations Strategy. PSNI provide the NI Policing Board with copies of the minutes, papers and any other relevant correspondence relating to the SDSG whom the Working Party report to.

Minutes of the NI Policing Board Human Resources Committee, available on the NI Policing Board website, reveal that the Deputy Chief Constable was to provide a briefing on the implementation of the strategy to the Board in May 2013. However, there does not appear to be any further information on this briefing available on the website.

**Question (2)** Has the Deputy Chief Constable provided a briefing to the NI Policing Board with regard to the objective and measure outlined above in relation to the protected characteristics of

religious belief and political opinion? Please provide relevant minutes and correspondence with the PSNI as far as possible.

## **Question 2 Answer**

The Resources Committee received a briefing from PSNI on 15 August 2013, with regards to the Equality, Diversity and Good Relations Strategy. An update on the data analysis measure was provided in the context of 'The Equality Diversity and Good Relations Strategy Action Plan Timetable' of which the relevant page has been attached for your information.

The minutes of this meeting will be available on the Policing Board's website a few days after they have been agreed at the next Resources Committee meeting on 19 September 2013. As these minutes are intended for future publication the exemption at Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act is engaged. The section 22 exemption is a qualified exemption and is subject to consideration of a public interest test. This means that a public authority must determine whether, on balance, it considers it to be in the wider public interest to maintain the exemption, or to release the requested information. We have carried out a public interest test, (attached) and we are satisfied that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**Question (3)** What role, if any, will the NI Policing Board have in the "data analysis" and "evaluation of service delivery" stages of the strategy?

## **Question 3 Answer**

The NI Policing Board will continue to sit as an observer on the PSNI SDSG and will continue to receive briefings to the Resources Committee on the implementation of the PSNI Equality, Diversity and Good Relations Strategy which include progress on the data analysis actions contained within the Strategy.

If you have queries about this request or the decision, please contact the Board quoting the reference number above. If you are unhappy with the service you have received and wish to make a complaint or request a review you should write to the Board's Chief Executive at the following address:

Northern Ireland Policing Board  
Waterside Tower  
31 Clarendon Road  
Clarendon Dock  
Belfast BT1 3BG

Email: [foi@nipolicingboard.org.uk](mailto:foi@nipolicingboard.org.uk)

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner. Generally, the Information Commissioner's Office cannot investigate or make a decision on a case unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Board. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:-

The Information Commissioner's Office – Northern Ireland  
3rd Floor  
12 Cromac Place  
Gasworks  
Ormeau Road  
Belfast  
BT7 2JB.

Telephone: - 02890 269 380  
Email: - ni@ico.org.uk

Please be advised that all Policing Board replies under Freedom of Information will be released into the public domain via our website @ [www.nipolicingboard.org.uk](http://www.nipolicingboard.org.uk).

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

	Action	Due Date	Progress to date
1	Using data analysis we will evaluate aspects of service delivery to ensure we are treating people fairly and with respect such as	2012/2014	Working Party established to progress this matter.
	use of force	2015/2017	Report due 2017.
	stop and search	2014/2015	Report due 2015.
	use of road stops	2014/2015	Report due 2015.
	use of discretion	2014/2015	Report due 2015.
	use of arrest	On Going	This work is now being progressed as part of a Criminal Justice Branch initiative.
	use of cautions	2014/2015	Report due 2015.
	use of fixed penalty	2012/2014	Report due 2014.
	use of juvenile cautions	2015/2017	Report due 2017.
	use of restorative cautions	2012/2014	Report due 2014.

## **Exemption at Section 22 of the FOIA – Information Intended for Future Publication**

### **PUBLIC INTEREST TEST CONSIDERATIONS**

**Requested information** – A copy of the minutes from the Resources Committee meeting on 15 August 2013.

#### **Arguments that weigh in favour of disclosure**

Release of the information would promote transparency, accountability and participation.

Providing the requested information is in line with the spirit of openness and transparency enshrined within FOI legislation.

#### **Arguments that weigh in favour of maintenance of the exemption**

The finalised version of the minutes of this meeting is not yet available.

Draft of the minutes has been prepared by Board officials but these may be incomplete as they have not yet been shared with the 3<sup>rd</sup> party who attended the meeting for comment on their input at the meeting. The 3<sup>rd</sup> party may recommend the information contained in the draft be amended.

Following consultation with the 3<sup>rd</sup> party, draft minutes of the meeting will be presented to the next meeting of the Resources Committee (scheduled to be held on 19 September 2013) for consideration and approval of Committee Members.

Subject to their approval by the Committee, it is the intention of the Board to publish the minutes on the Board's website a few days after the Committee meeting on 19 September 2013.

The Board should not place information in the public domain that may be inaccurate and subject to future amendment.

#### **Decision**

In all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.