DOJ Section 75

EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

Title of Policy: **Probation Board NI Draft Budget Allocation 2025-26**

The legal background – Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between person of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, or sexual orientation.

- between men and women generally.

- between persons with a disability and persons without; and,

- between persons with dependants and persons without[1].

Without prejudice to the obligations set out above, the Department is also required to:

- have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group; and
- meet legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.

Introduction

Part 1. Policy scoping – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.
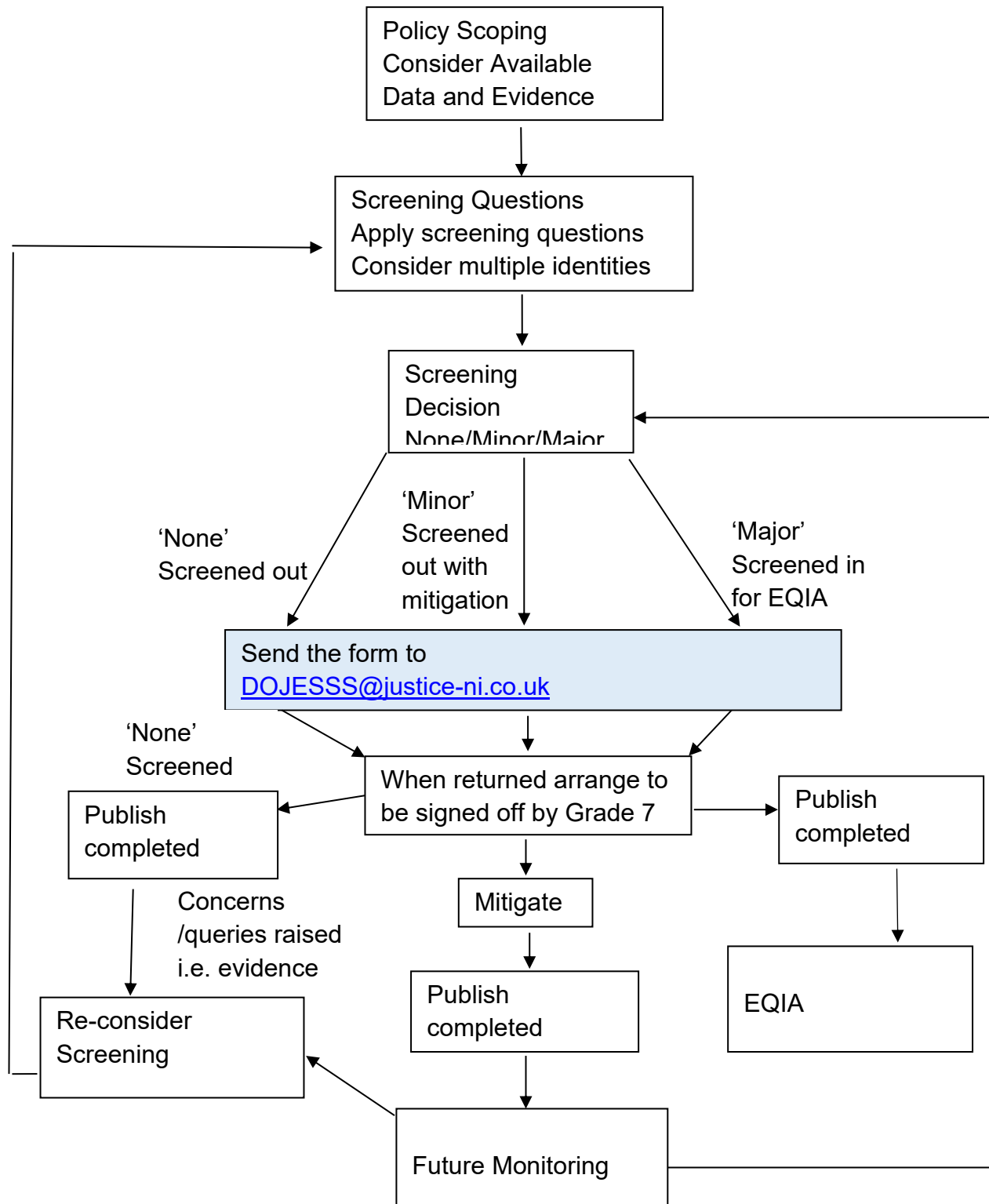
Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or

the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 4. Monitoring – provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

Part 5. Approval and authorisation – verifies the public authority's approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

A screening flowchart is provided below.

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Policy Scoping          │
│ Consider Available      │
│ Data and Evidence       │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Screening Questions     │
│ Apply screening questions│
│ Consider multiple       │
│ identities              │
└─────────────────────────┘
            │
            ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│ Screening               │
│ Decision                │
│ None/Minor/Major        │
└─────────────────────────┘
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'None'
Screened out

'Minor'
Screened out with mitigation

'Major'
Screened in for EQIA

Send the form to
DOJESSS@justice-ni.co.uk

'None'
Screened

Publish completed

When returned arrange to be signed off by Grade 7

Publish completed

Concerns /queries raised i.e. evidence

Mitigate

Re-consider Screening

Publish completed

EQIA

Future Monitoring

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

Department of Justice Draft Budget 2025-26 allocations

_____

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

_____

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

_____

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to <u>benefit</u> from the intended policy?
If so, explain how.

_____

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

_____

Who owns and who implements the policy?

_____

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

If yes, are they (please delete as appropriate)
When reviewed against the draft opening budget PBNI is left with a residual pressure of £494k, excluding Employers National Insurance pressures of £353k. While steps are being taken to try and mange the pressure there is no immediate reduction in the level of service provision proposed.

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please delete as appropriate)

PBNI Staff
- Staffing numbers are directly impacted by the level of funding.

PBNI Service Users
- Our records indicate that majority of PBNI's 4500+ Service Users are male (88%); and aged between 30-39 years old (34.5%).

Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) organisations
- PBNI provides a level of funding to community and voluntary sector organisations.

Other public sector organisations
- Other public sector organisations may be impacted as a result of the decisions PBNI take against the draft budget.

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- **what are they?**

- Mobility and Transfer Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Programmes & Grant Funding policy
- PBNI Estate and ICT strategies
- Probation Practice Standards
- PBNI Corporate Plan 2023-26
- PBNI Business Plan 2025-26

- **who owns them?**
PBNI

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to signpost to S75 data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Religious belief evidence / information:

Service users
38.6% of Service Users have not supplied information regarding religious belief. 26.5% are Roman Catholic and 19.1% are Protestant, with 6.4% stating none and 5.3% refusing to state. Of the remaining responses 2.4% identified as other Christian, 0.9% as Other, 0.4% Muslim, 0.3% Buddhist and 0.1% Jewish.

Staff
43% of our staff indicate they are Protestant and 51%, Roman Catholic, with 6% citing non determined 'None' as their religious belief.

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Political Opinion evidence / information:
Service Users -

We do not hold details of political opinion of Service Users.

Staff –
40% of our staff have not disclosed their political opinion, 30% said they have no political opinion, 11% state they are nationalist and 7% are unionist, 5% prefer not to say, and 7% say Other.

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Racial Group evidence / information:

Service Users

Of the Service Users, we hold monitoring information on, the majority (54.4%) have stated their racial group as White with, 1.6% Irish traveller, 0.4% showing as other and less than 1% in any other racial group.

Staff
98% of our staff have recorded White as their racial group.

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Age evidence / information:

Service users -

The information we hold on Service Users in general is accurate as it derived from Date of Birth.

The majority of our Service Users are aged 30-39 (34.5%), 1.6% under 20; 26.1 % are 20-29; 21.5% are 40-49; 11.0% are 50-59/ and 5.3% are over 60 years old.

Staff -
Age profile of Staff is accurate as it is derived from Date of Birth information.

Our workforce is 3% aged 18-25; 24% aged 26-35; 25% aged 36-45; 30% aged 46-55; and 18% over aged 56 years.

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Marital Status evidence / information:

Service Users -

Of the 42.7% of Service Users, generally, we have monitoring information from, the majority are Single – never married (38.8%) and less than 6% are in other categories, including divorced or dissolved civil partnerships, married, separated, or widowed.

Staff –
Nearly half our workforce is married or with civil partners– 47%, 34% are single; with 7% cohabiting; 9.5% divorced or separated; 2% widowed; and 0.5% not disclosed.

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Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

Service Users -

52% stated they were heterosexual, with 2.3% across all LGBTQ categories.

Staff –
91% of our workforce have said they are heterosexual, 2% bisexual; 2% Gay / Lesbian; and 5% did not disclose.

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Men and Women generally evidence / information:

Service Users -
The majority of Service Users are male. Over 88% of our Service Users are male.

Staff –
77% of our workforce are female and 23% male.

Therefore, any changes will affect this group disproportionately.

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Disability evidence / information:

Service Users
Of the 57.6% of Service Users, who responded to this area of the monitoring record, 35.5% stated they had a disability. The majority of those with a disability had a mental health condition (22.6%)

Staff
89% of our staff have indicated they are not disabled. 11% have indicated they have a disability.

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Dependants' evidence / information:
Service Users
61.9% of service users stated their dependant responsibilities. 40.5% said they had none. 11.2% said they had care of a child and 5% had responsibility for care of an elderly person or a person with a disability.

Impacts on Children
Impact on victims of sexual abuse, domestic violence, and other serious violence regarding an increase in offending due to fewer staff available to work with service users.

Staff –
49% of our staff have not disclosed if they have dependents. 39% have said they have care of a child, 9% care for an adult; and 3% care for a person with a disability.

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Needs, experiences, and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences, and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify <u>details</u> of the <u>needs, experiences, and priorities</u> for each of the Section 75 categories below:

1. Religious belief

Not applicable

_____

2. Political Opinion

Not applicable

_____

3. Racial Group

Not applicable

_____

4. Age

Not applicable

_____

5. Marital status

Not applicable

_____

6. Sexual orientation

Not applicable

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7. Men and Women Generally

Service Users – current and potential

Nearing 90% of service users generally are male that need probation support to complete their court orders.

Staff
Women make up most staff within the organisation. Therefore, there will always be an impact on a greater number of women than men arising.

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8. Disability

While statistically, our records show that 35.5% of our service users have a disability, feedback from Service User Groups and from our Probation Officers, indicate that most of our Service Users have poor mental health condition(s); and largely have experienced negative trauma in their lives. These combined needs, mean that the management of Service Users during the period of their licences is often complex due to the level of support required.

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9. Dependants
Not applicable

Part 2. Screening questions

Screening questions

1. **What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?**

   Please provide <u>details of the likely policy impacts</u> and <u>determine the level of impact</u> for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

   PBNI's 2025-26 draft budget allocation is likely to have the following impact:

   Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:
   None
   What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None   (circle as appropriate)

   Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:
   None
   What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None   (circle as appropriate)

   Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:
   None
   What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None   (circle as appropriate)

   Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**:
   None
   What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None   (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**:
None
What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / (None) (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**:
None
What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / (None) (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**:

The majority of Service Users are male. The overall budget will therefore impact on this Section 75 group, disproportionately. However, it is not likely to have a major impact, as there are no plans to actively reduce the levels of service delivery.

Programme Delivery participants are generally male, and the victims of sexual assault and domestic abuse are predominantly female. PBNI will continue to provide programme support for high and medium risk service users to be offered programme places where required.

Staff
The majority of PBNI staff are female, therefore the impact of any required workforce changes which result in redeployment will affect this group disproportionately. Staff may be required to move posts / locations / teams to meet organisational requirements however where possible this is mitigated to ensure no detrimental impact e.g. moves are not forced where there are significant personal health issues.

What is the level of impact? None // Minor   Major (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability**:

Service Users
Ther are no detrimental impacts here. PBNI plans to continue to provide counsellor assistance for those which drug and alcohol addictions, and the Capital programme will allow ongoing updates to enhance disability access.

Staff
There are no indications in a negative impact on staff due to disability. Any issues in relation to disability that affect relocation, will be considered fully as part of the redeployment process.

PBNI is currently consulting on our Disability Action Plan.
What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**:

Service Users
A relatively low percentage (16.2%) of service users have indicated that they have dependent responsibilities.   While funding for a parenting programme is to be ceased, these funds will support housing assistance which another key area for PBNI service users that also impacts on dependents.

Staff
There are no indications in a negative impact on staff due to having dependants or none.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (circle as appropriate)

Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?
No

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide <u>details:</u>
If No, provide <u>reasons:</u>

Service Users
PBNI Draft Budget Allocation will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Staff
Recruitment and selection will promote equality of opportunity within this grouping.

The budget allocation will aim to support PBNI in the implementation of its Equality and Good Relations and Disability Action Plans, which are currently out for consultation.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide <u>details:</u>
If No, provide <u>reasons</u>

Service Users
PBNI Draft Budget Allocation will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Staff

PBNI Draft Budget Allocation will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide <u>details:</u>
If No, provide <u>reasons</u>

Service Users
PBNI Draft Budget Allocation will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Staff
PBNI Draft Budget Allocation will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Age - If Yes, provide <u>details:</u>
If No, provide <u>reasons:</u>

Service Users
PBNI Draft Budget Allocation will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Staff
PBNI Draft Budget Allocation will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Marital Status - If Yes, provide <u>details:</u>
If No, provide <u>reasons</u>

Service Users
Draft Budget Allocations will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Staff
Draft Budget Allocations will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide <u>details:</u>
If No, provide <u>reasons:</u>

Service Users
PBNI Draft Budget Allocation will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Staff
PBNI Draft Budget Allocation will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide <u>details:</u>
If No, provide <u>reasons:</u>

Service Users
Draft Budget Allocations will likely impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Staff
Although the majority of staff affected by the draft Budget Allocation are women, there should not be a negative impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Disability - If Yes, provide <u>details:</u>
If No, provide <u>reasons:</u>

Service Users
Budget proposals will not impact on the promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 grouping.

Staff
Budget proposals will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Dependants - If Yes, provide <u>details:</u>
If No, provide <u>reasons:</u>

Service Users
Budget proposals will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

Staff
Budget proposals will not impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group.

2. **To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group?**

    Please provide <u>details of the likely policy impact</u> and <u>determine the level of impact</u> for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

    Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:
    None

    What is the level of impact?
    Minor / Major / None   (circle as appropriate)

    Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:
    None

    What is the level of impact?
    Minor / Major / None

    Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:
    None

    What is the level of impact?
    Minor / Major / None

3. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group?

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide <u>details</u>:
If No, provide <u>reasons</u>:
The Draft Budget Allocation will not provide opportunity to promote good relations for Service Users or Staff.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide <u>details</u>:
If No, provide <u>reasons</u>
The Draft Budget Allocations will not provide opportunity to promote good relations for Service Users or Staff.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide <u>details</u>:
If No, provide <u>reasons</u>
The Draft Budget Allocations will not provide opportunity to promote good relations for Service Users or Staff.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?
(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

PBNI works with service users from all Section 75 groupings. Changes in service provision has the potential to impact across all service users. The draft budget allocation does not require any substantial change in service provision and allows maintenance of a level of additional CVS backed support services which can be accessed by all service users, including those who fall under multiple groupings.

In 2025-26 PBNI will be developing its womens and service user engagement strategies, as well as implementation of tis equality and disability action plans that are currently being consulted on.

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

There is limited data on the impact from the implementation of the draft budget on people with multiple identities.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

Screened Out – No EQIA

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated, or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

Equality impacts and potential mitigations will be implemented as we implement the budgetary management reductions.

We will continue to monitor the impacts on Section 75 groups and try to enhance our monitoring information for Service Users. If further funding does not become available throughout the year any decisions to reduce spend will be further screened.

Staff who are represented in one or more Section 75 group, who are subject to redeployment, will have any needs affecting caring, disability, or general personal circumstances taken into consideration.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed, or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

PBNI is not able to adjust the budget, however has set out initial steps to move towards a balanced budget taking into account impact on organisation; staff; Service Users and public safety; as well as the equality impacts of the budget management decisions.

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been **'screened in'** for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion	Rating (1-3)
Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations	N/A
Social need	N/A
Effect on people's daily lives	N/A
Relevance to a public authority's functions	N/A

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details.

The Budget may be affected by any decisions of NI Assembly during 2025-26.

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Further advice on monitoring can be found at: ECNI Monitoring Guidance for Public Authorities

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Paul King
Position/Job Title: Head of Finance & Estates
Date: 11 February 2025

Approved by: Paul King
Position/Job Title: Head of Finance & Estates
Date: 11 February 2025

Prior to final approval the Screening Form should be forwarded to DOJESSS@justice-ni.gov.uk for comment/quality assurance. Contact the branch should you require advice or have any queries prior to this stage.

Any NIPS forms should also be forwarded to Peter.Grant@justice-ni.gov.uk

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made

easily accessible on the DoJ website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.