



Equality Scheme

***Written in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the
Northern Ireland Act 1998***

This document is available in a range of formats on request.

Please contact us with your requirements

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Approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

28th March 2012

Foreword

This Equality Scheme is an important document in that it is a statement of the Probation Board's commitment to fulfilling its statutory obligations in compliance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Act places duties on the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) to promote equality of opportunity and to have due regard to the desirability of promoting good relations. This is PBNI's second Section 75 Equality Scheme, the first being published in January of 2002.

In this our revised equality scheme, we set out how the PBNI proposes to fulfill its Section 75 statutory duties.

PBNI continue to commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time and money to make sure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that the equality scheme is implemented effectively, and on time.

PBNI have effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring effective compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing progress.

PBNI will develop and deliver a new programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring that all staff and Board members are made fully aware of PBNI's equality scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it. PBNI will develop a programme of awareness raising for consultees on the Section 75 statutory duties and the commitments contained in the equality scheme.

The Chairman and the Director of Probation are fully committed to effectively fulfilling Section 75 statutory duties across all functions (including service provision, employment and procurement) through the effective implementation of the PBNI equality scheme.

PBNI realise the important role that the community and voluntary sector and the general public have to play to ensure the Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. The PBNI equality scheme demonstrates how determined they are to ensure there are opportunities, for people affected by its work, to positively influence how they carry out their functions in line with Section 75 statutory duties. It also offers the means whereby persons directly

affected by what they consider to be a failure, on PBNI's part, to comply with its equality scheme, can make complaints.

On behalf of PBNI and staff we are pleased to support and endorse this equality scheme which has been drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Commission guidelines.

Signed

Ronnie Spence

Brian McCaughey

**Ronnie Spence
Board Chairman**

**Brian McCaughey
Director of Probation**

Date 26 October 2011

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires the Probation Board for Northern Ireland to comply with two statutory duties:

Section 75 (1)

In carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland the PBNI are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- men and women generally
- persons with a disability and persons without
- persons with dependants and persons without.

Section 75 (2)

In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland the PBNI are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

“Functions” include the “powers and duties” of a public authority. This includes employment and procurement functions. Please see below under “Who we are and what we do” for a detailed explanation of functions.

How we propose to fulfil the Section 75 duties in relation to the relevant functions of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland

1.2 Schedule 9 4. (1) of the Act requires the PBNI as a designated public authority to set out in an equality scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to its relevant functions. This equality scheme is intended to fulfil that statutory requirement. It is both a statement of PBNI’s arrangements for

fulfilling the Section 75 statutory duties and a plan for their implementation.

1.3 We the Probation Board for Northern Ireland are committed to the discharge of our Section 75 obligations in all parts of the organisation and we will commit the necessary available resources in terms of people, time and money to ensure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that our equality scheme can be implemented effectively.

Who we are and what we do

The Board – its role, functions and policies

1.4 The Board's mandatory functions are set out in section 4(1) of the Probation Board (Northern Ireland) Order 1982:

- (a) secure the maintenance of an adequate and efficient probation service;
- (b) secure that arrangements are made for persons to perform work under community service orders;
- (c) provide such probation officers and other staff as the Secretary of State considers necessary to perform social welfare duties in prisons and young offenders centres; and
- (d) undertake such other duties as may be prescribed.

1.5 Further functions, which may be carried out with the approval of the Secretary of State, are set out in section 4(2) of the Order:

- (a) provide and maintain probation hostels and other establishments for use in connection with the supervision and assistance of offenders;
- (b) provide and maintain bail hostels;
- (c) make and give effect to schemes for the supervision and assistance of offenders and the prevention of crime;
- (d) enter into arrangements with voluntary organisations or any other persons (including government departments and public bodies) whereby those organisations or persons undertake, on such terms (including terms as to payment by the Board to those organisations or persons) as may be specified in the arrangements –

- (i) the provision and maintenance of such hostels and other establishments as are mentioned in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b);
- (ii) to give effect to such schemes for the supervision and assistance of offenders and the prevention of crime, whether made by those organisations or persons or made by the Board under sub-paragraph (c).

1.6 The PBNI provides services across Northern Ireland employing more than 400 people and overseeing a budget of £19m.

1.7 Just over half of PBNI's staff are Probation Officers based in more than 35 sites throughout Northern Ireland.

1.8 Probation Officers are qualified social workers but PBNI also employs people to work in other areas of the organisation such as administration, finance, information technology, human resources and operational support staff e.g. Probation Service Officers and Community Service Supervisors.

1.9 As an equal opportunities employer PBNI aims to recruit and develop the very best talent available across a wide range of disciplines.

1.10 The procurement of goods, works and services required by PBNI are conducted in a fair and transparent way and based upon the Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy having due regard to propriety and regularity.

Chapter 2

Our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the Section 75 duties

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (a))

2.1 PBNI's arrangements for assessing compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties are outlined throughout relevant parts of this equality scheme. Specifically PBNI have the following arrangements in place for assessing our compliance:

Responsibilities and reporting

2.2 PBNI is committed to the fulfilment of Section 75 obligations in all parts of its work.

2.3 Responsibility for the effective implementation of PBNI's equality scheme lies with the Director of Probation. The Equality Manager is accountable to the Probation Board for the development, implementation, maintenance and review of the equality scheme in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, including any good practice or guidance that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission.

2.4 PBNI established an Equality Steering Group, Chaired by a Deputy Director of Probation, to ensure a consistent approach to the development of PBNI's Section 75 equality scheme and action plans. Progress reports will be given to the Probation Board on a quarterly basis and PBNI's annual Section 75 Progress report will also be presented and discussed with the Board.

2.5 Objectives relating to the statutory duties will be integrated into the strategic and operational business planning process.

2.6 If you have any questions or comments regarding PBNI's equality scheme, please contact in the first instance PBNI's Equality Manager at the address given below and we will respond to you as soon as possible:

Equality Manager
80-90 North Street
Belfast

BT1 1LD
Tel 028 90 26 24 68
Textphone: 028 90 26 24 90
SMS text messages to 07823 884 124
equality@pbni.gsi.gov.uk

2.7 Employees' job descriptions and performance plans reflect their contributions to the discharge of the Section 75 statutory duties and implementation of the equality scheme, where relevant. Personal performance plans are subject to appraisal in the annual performance review.

2.8 The PBNI prepares an annual report on the progress it has made on implementing the arrangements set out in this equality scheme to discharge its Section 75 statutory duties (Section 75 annual progress report). Progress will continue to be reflected in organisational annual reports.

2.9 The Section 75 annual progress report will be sent to the Equality Commission by 31 August each year and will follow guidance on annual reporting issued by the Equality Commission.

2.10 Section 75 annual progress reports are available on our website www.pbni.org.uk, or by contacting PBNI's Equality Manager.

2.11 PBNI liaises closely with the Equality Commission to ensure that progress on the implementation of its equality scheme is maintained.

Action plan/action measures

2.12 The PBNI has developed action plans to promote equality of opportunity and good relations. These action plans are set out in Appendix 6 and Appendix 7 to this equality scheme.

2.13 The action measures that make up these action plans are relevant to PBNI functions. They have been developed and prioritised on the basis of an audit of inequalities. The audit of inequalities has gathered information across the Section 75

categories¹ to identify the inequalities that exist for service users and those affected by PBNI policies.

2.14 Action measures will be specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, which are realistic and time-bound. Action measures will include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement.

2.15 PBNI Equality Action and Good Relations Action Plans are designed to last five years. Implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into the business planning process.

2.16 PBNI has publically consulted on the contents of its Equality Scheme and Action plans. The action plans are not subject to Equality Commission approval.

2.17 PBNI will monitor its progress on the delivery of action measures annually and update the action plans as necessary to ensure that they remain effective and relevant to its functions and work.

2.18 The PBNI will inform the Commission of any changes or amendments to its action plans and will also include this information in its Section 75 annual progress report to the Commission. The Section 75 annual progress report will incorporate information on progress PBNI have made in implementing action plans/action measures.

2.19 Once finalised, action plans will be publicly available on the PBNI website www.pbni.org.uk. If you require them in an alternative format please contact the PBNI Equality Manager as per details supplied in Para 2.6.

Chapter 3

Our arrangements for consulting

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (a)) - on matters to which a duty (S75 (1) or (2)) is likely to be relevant (including details of the persons to be consulted).

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (b)) on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by us on the promotion of equality of opportunity.

3.1 The PBNI recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of its statutory equality duties. PBNI will consult on its equality scheme, action measures, equality impact assessments and other matters relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.

3.2 The PBNI are committed to carrying out consultation in accordance with the Equality Commission's guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*'.

3.3 Equality consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy, the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, PBNI staff and their trades unions and such other groups who have a legitimate interest in the matter, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest.

3.4 Initially all consultees (see Appendix 3), as a matter of course, will be notified (by email or post) of the matter/policy being consulted upon to ensure they are aware of all consultations. Thereafter, to ensure the most effective use of the PBNI and consultees' resources, we will take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the matter/policy being consulted upon and to whom the matter/policy is of particular relevance. This may include for example regional or local consultations, sectoral or thematic consultation etc.

3.5 Consultation with all stakeholders will begin as early as possible. The PBNI will engage with affected individuals and representative groups to identify how best to consult and engage. Methods of consultation may include:

- 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/opt out of the consultation
- Internet
- Social Media
- Telephone

3.6 This list is not exhaustive and the PBNI may develop other additional methods of consultation more appropriate to key stakeholders and the matter being consulted upon.

3.7 The PBNI will consider the accessibility and format of every method of consultation it uses in order to remove barriers to the consultation process. Specific consideration will be given to existing and developing good practice on how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities) and minority ethnic communities' e.g. The Equality Commissions guidance *Let's Talk Let's Listen* (2008). PBNI will review how information is provided with a view to supplying more information in easy read format suitable for children and young people, people with learning disabilities and minority ethnic communities

3.8 Information will be made available, on request, in alternative formats, in a timely manner, usually within two weeks of receiving the request. The PBNI will ensure that such consultees have equal time to respond.

3.9 Specific training and support will be provided to those facilitating consultations to ensure that they have the necessary skills to communicate effectively with consultees.

3.10 To ensure effective consultation with consultees on Section 75 matters, PBNI will develop a programme of awareness raising

on the Section 75 statutory duties and the commitments in its equality scheme by undertaking the following:

- Policy writing staff will receive assistance from Business Planning & Development in relation to identifying the most appropriate consultation methodology
- PBNI will review and revise its consultation policy and procedures to reflect current best practice
- PBNI will regularly review its list of consultees to ensure that it is up to date

3.11 The consultation period lasts for a minimum of twelve weeks to allow adequate time for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view. However, in exceptional circumstances (for example, implementing EU Directives or UK wide legislation, meeting Health and Safety requirements, addressing urgent public health matters or complying with Court judgements) when this timescale is not feasible, the PBNI may shorten timescales to eight weeks or less before the policy is implemented. The PBNI may continue consultation thereafter and will review the policy as part of its monitoring commitments². If a consultation exercise is to take place over a period when consultees are less able to respond, for example, over the summer or Christmas break, or if the policy under consideration is particularly complex, the PBNI will give consideration to the feasibility of allowing a longer period for the consultation.

3.12 Where, under these exceptional circumstances, the PBNI must implement a policy immediately, as it is beyond its authority's control, it may consult after implementation of the policy, in order to ensure that any impacts of the policy are considered.

3.13 The PBNI are conscious of the fact that affected individuals and representative groups may have different needs. The PBNI will take appropriate measures to ensure full participation in any meetings that are held. The PBNI will consider for example the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be conducted, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer and/or interpreter is necessary, and whether the provision of childcare and support for other carers is required.

3.14 The PBNI will make all relevant information available to consultees in appropriate formats to ensure meaningful consultation. This includes detailed information on the policy proposal being consulted upon and any relevant quantitative and qualitative data.

3.15 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, the PBNI will take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

3.16 The PBNI will provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report is prepared which includes summary information on the policy consulted upon, a summary of consultees' comments and a summary of consideration of and response to consultees' input. The feedback is provided in formats suitable to consultees. (Please see also 6.3)

3.17 A list of PBNI consultees is included in this equality scheme at Appendix 3. It can also be obtained from the PBNI website at www.pbni.org.uk and on request from the PBNI Equality Manager; contact details are as recorded in Para 2.6.

3.18 The PBNI consultation list is not exhaustive and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to its functions and policies.

3.19 The PBNI welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations wishing to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact the PBNI Equality Manager to provide your contact details and have your areas of interest noted or have your name/details removed or amended. Please also inform us at this stage if you would like information sent to you in a particular format or language.

Chapter 4

Our arrangements for assessing, monitoring and publishing the impact of policies

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (b); Schedule 9 4. (2) (c); Schedule 9 4. (2) (d); Schedule 9 9. (1); Schedule 9 9. (2))

Our arrangements for assessing the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity (Schedule 9 4. (2) (b))

4.1 In the context of Section 75, 'policy' is very broadly defined and it covers all the ways in which the PBNI carry out or propose to carry out its functions in relation to Northern Ireland. In respect of this equality scheme, the term policy is used for any (proposed/amended/existing) strategy, policy initiative or practice and/or decision, whether written or unwritten and irrespective of the label given to it, e.g., 'draft', 'pilot', 'high level' or 'sectoral'.

4.2 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, the PBNI take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy, as required by Schedule 9 9. (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

4.3 PBNI uses the tools of **screening** and **equality impact assessment** to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we will relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and will also follow Equality Commission guidance:

- the guidance on screening, including the screening template, as detailed in the Commission's guidance '*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*' and
- on undertaking an equality impact assessment as detailed in the Commission's guidance '*Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)*'.

Screening

4.4 The purpose of screening is to identify those policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

4.5 Screening is completed at the earliest opportunity in the policy development/review process. Policies which the PBNI propose to adopt will be subject to screening prior to implementation. For more detailed strategies or policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages, we will screen at various stages during implementation.

4.6 The lead role in the screening of a policy is taken by the policy decision maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy. However, screening will also involve other relevant staff members, for example, equality specialists, those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work areas. Where possible PBNI will include key stakeholders in the screening process.

4.7 The following questions are applied to all our policies as part of the screening process:

- I. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (minor/major/none)
- II. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?
- III. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)
- IV. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

4.8 In order to answer the screening questions, PBNI gather all relevant information and data, both qualitative and quantitative. In taking this evidence into account it considers the different needs,

experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 equality categories. Any screening decision will be informed by this evidence.

4.9 Completion of screening, taking into account consideration of the answers to all four screening questions set out in 4.7 above, will lead to one of the following three outcomes:

1. the policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment
2. the policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted
3. the policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy proposed to be adopted.

4.10 If screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'minor' in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, PBNI may on occasion decide to proceed with an equality impact assessment, depending on the policy. If an equality impact assessment (EQIA) is not to be conducted we will nonetheless consider measures that might mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations. Where PBNI mitigate, we will outline in the screening template the reasons to support this decision together with the proposed changes, amendments or alternative policy. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy owner within PBNI.

4.11 If screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'major' in respect of one, or more, of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, PBNI will normally subject the policy to an equality impact assessment. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy owner within PBNI.

4.12 If screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'none', in respect of all of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, PBNI may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, we will give details of the reasons for the decision taken. This screening decision will be 'signed off' by the appropriate policy owner within PBNI.

4.13 As soon as possible following the completion of the screening process, the screening template, signed off and approved by the senior manager responsible for the policy, will be made available on the Equality & Diversity pages of the PBNI website www.pbni.org.uk. Hard copies will be made available on request to the PBNI [Equality Manager](#).

4.14 If a consultee, including the Equality Commission, raises a concern about a screening decision based on supporting evidence, PBNI will review the screening decision.

4.15 PBNI screening reports are published regularly [see below at 4.20 - 4.22 and 4.23 for details].

Equality impact assessment

4.16 An equality impact assessment (EQIA) is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is formal or informal, and irrespective of the scope of that policy. The primary function of an EQIA is to determine the extent of any impact of a policy upon the Section 75 categories and to determine if the impact is an adverse one. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the likely positive outcomes of a policy and to seek ways to more effectively promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

4.17 Once a policy is screened and screening has identified that an equality impact assessment is necessary, PBNI will carry out the EQIA in accordance with Equality Commission guidance. The equality impact assessment will be carried out as part of the policy development process, before the policy is implemented.

4.18 Any equality impact assessment will be subject to consultation at the appropriate stage(s). (For details see above Chapter 3 “Our Arrangements for Consulting”).

Our arrangements for publishing the results of the assessments of the likely impact of policies we have adopted or propose to adopt on the promotion of equality of opportunity (Schedule 9 4. (2) (d); Schedule 9 9. (1))

4.19 PBNI make publicly available the results of assessments (screening and EQIA) of the likely impact of policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

What we publish

4.20 Screening reports

These are published quarterly or more regularly if needed. Screening reports detail:

- All policies screened by PBNI over the period
- A statement of the aim(s) of the policy/policies to which the assessment relates
- Consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact
- Consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity.
- PBNI equality screening decisions
- Where applicable, a timetable for conducting equality impact assessments
- A link to the full completed policy screening on the PBNI website so that consultees can see clearly how PBNI have considered the equality issues

4.21 Screening templates

For details on the availability of PBNI screening templates please refer to 4.13.

4.22 Equality impact assessments

EQIA reports are published once the impact assessment has been completed. These reports include:

- A statement of the aim of the policy assessed
- Information and data collected

- Details of the assessment of impact(s)
- Consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact
- Consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity
- Consultation responses
- The decision taken
- Future monitoring plans.

How we publish the information

4.23 All information PBNI publish is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see 6.3 below.

Where we publish the information

4.24 The results of PBNI assessments (screening reports and completed templates, the results of equality impact assessments) are available on the PBNI website www.pbni.org.uk and on request from the PBNI Equality Manager details as recorded at Para 2.6

4.25 In addition to the above, screening reports (electronic link or hard copy on request if more suitable for recipients) which include all policies screened over a 3 month period are also sent directly to all consultees on a quarterly basis.

4.26 PBNI will inform the general public about the availability of this material through public communications including press releases and public notices where appropriate.

Our arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies we have adopted on equality of opportunity

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (c))

4.27 Monitoring can assist PBNI to deliver better public services and continuous improvements. Monitoring Section 75 information involves the processing of sensitive personal data (data relating to the racial or ethnic origin of individuals, sexual orientation, political opinion, religious belief, etc). In order to carry out monitoring in a confidential and effective manner, the PBNI follows guidance from

the Office of the Information Commissioner and the Equality Commission.

4.28 PBNI monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity of policies it has adopted. PBNI are also committed to monitoring more broadly to identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations in line with Equality Commission guidance.

4.29 PBNI has in place systems to gather both qualitative and quantitative data to monitor the impact of policies and identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations these are:

- The collection, collation and analysis of equality monitoring data at Pre-Sentence Report stage for all new offenders across all nine equality categories on an on-going basis
- The collection, collation and analysis of equality monitoring data for all offenders currently under the supervision of PBNI across all nine equality categories
- The collection, collation and analysis of equality monitoring data on people using the Victim Information Scheme across all nine equality categories on an on-going basis
- The collection, collation and analysis of equality monitoring data on application for Community Development Funding across all nine equality categories on an on-going basis
- The collection, collation and analysis of equality monitoring data for the recruitment of staff across all nine equality categories on an on-going basis. This information can also provide analysis of leavers, internal promotions and grade analysis etc.
- Undertaking or commissioning new data if necessary

4.30 If over a two year period monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of

opportunity to be promoted, PBNI will ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality groups.

4.31 PBNI reviews its EQIA monitoring information on an annual basis. Equality monitoring information forms part of PBNI's on-going research programme.

Our arrangements for publishing the results of our monitoring
(Schedule 9 4. (2) (d))

4.32 Schedule 9 4. (2) (d) requires PBNI to publish the results of the monitoring of adverse impacts of policies it has adopted. However, PBNI are committed to monitoring more broadly and the results of policy monitoring are published as follows:

4.33 EQIA monitoring information is published as part of PBNI's Section 75 annual progress report [see 2.7]

4.34 On-going monitoring information will be made available publicly on the Equality section of PBNI website. Equality research will be shared with staff on its Intranet so that policy makers have the most accurate information on which to base their screening decisions.

4.35 All information published is accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see below at 6.3 for details.

Chapter 5

Staff training

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (e))

Commitment to staff training

5.1 PBNI recognises that awareness raising and training play an important role in the effective implementation of its Section 75 duties.

5.2 The Director of Probation will positively communicate the commitment of the PBNI to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally.

To this end PBNI have introduced an effective communication and training programme for all staff and will ensure that its commitment to the Section 75 statutory duties are made clear in all relevant publications.

Training objectives

5.3 The PBNI will draw up a training plan for its staff which will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- to raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, its equality scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme
- to provide those staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
- to provide those staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with the PBNI equality scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively
- to provide those staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively
- to provide those staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of the PBNI equality

scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

Awareness raising and training arrangements

5.4 The following arrangements are in place to ensure that all staff and board members are aware of and understand their equality obligations.

- PBNI will develop a summary of this equality scheme and make it available to all staff.
- PBNI will provide access to copies of the full equality scheme for all staff and ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively.
- Staff in the PBNI will receive a briefing on this equality scheme within one year of publication.
- The Section 75 statutory duties will form part of induction training for new staff.
- Focused training is provided for key staff within PBNI who are directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of equality scheme commitments (for example those involved in research and data collection, policy development, service design, conducting equality impact assessments, consultation, monitoring and evaluation).
- Where appropriate, training will be provided to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups.
- When appropriate and on an ongoing basis, arrangements will be made to ensure staff are kept up to date with Section 75 developments.

5.5 Training and awareness raising programmes will, where relevant, be developed in association with the appropriate Section 75 groups and staff. In order to share resources and expertise, the PBNI will, where possible, work closely with other bodies and agencies in the development and delivery of training.

Monitoring and evaluation

5.6 PBNI training programme is subject to the following monitoring and evaluation arrangements:

- PBNI evaluate the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives.
- PBNI will record the numbers and grade of staff trained
- The extent to which training objectives have been met will be reported on as part of the Section 75 annual progress report, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

Chapter 6

Our arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and services we provide

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (f))

6.1 PBNI is committed to ensuring that the information it disseminates and the services it provide are accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland. These arrangements are kept under review to ensure that this remains the case.

6.2 PBNI are aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others. In particular:

- People with sensory, learning, communication and mobility disabilities may require printed information in other formats.
- Members of ethnic minority groups, whose first language is not English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English.
- Children and young people may not be able to fully access or understand information.

Access to information

6.3 To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, PBNI provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. Where the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided. Alternative formats may include Easy Read, Braille, audio formats (CD, mp3 or DAISY), large print or minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

6.4 PBNI works with young people, disabled and minority ethnic organisations and takes account of existing and developing good practice.

6.5 PBNI will respond to requests for information in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within two weeks. PBNI work with ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and children and young people and will from time to time consult where appropriate with these groups both in custody and in the community.

6.6 PBNI uses interpreters and translation services to ensure that those who cannot speak English are able to communicate with our staff.

6.7 In disseminating information through the media PBNI will seek to advertise in the press where appropriate.

6.8 PBNI will use emerging social media as appropriate to communicate with consultees. The PBNI website has been enhanced to include a prominent place on its home page for equality & diversity information. The public are encouraged to contact us in relation to consultations or specific queries.

Access to services

6.9 PBNI is committed to ensuring that all of its services are fully accessible to everyone in the community across the Section 75 categories. The PBNI also adheres to the relevant provisions of current anti-discrimination legislation.

6.10 PBNI has offices or reporting centres in most major towns in Northern Ireland and works collaboratively with partners and local communities to address issues and seek solutions related to those at risk of offending and re-offending.

Assessing public access to information and services

6.11 PBNI will review public access across all functions, in relation to access to information and services. This review will align with PBNI corporate triennial planning cycle and will seek to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted.

6.12 PBNI will periodically evaluate consultations to assess their effectiveness and use this information to inform the development of new approaches to consultation.

Chapter 7

Timetable for measures we propose in this equality scheme

(Schedule 9 4. (3) (b))

7.1 Appendix 4 outlines the PBNI timetable for all measures proposed within this equality scheme. The measures outlined in this timetable will be incorporated into PBNI business planning processes.

7.2 This timetable is different from and in addition to PBNI's commitment to developing action plans/action measures to specifically address inequalities and further promote equality of opportunity and good relations. PBNI have included in its equality scheme a commitment to develop an action plan. Accordingly, this commitment is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 4. For information on these action measures please see above at 2.11 – 2.18.

Chapter 8

Our equality complaints procedure

(Schedule 9 10.)

8.1 The PBNI are responsive to the views of members of the public. BPNI will endeavour to resolve all complaints made to them.

8.2 Schedule 9 paragraph 10 of the Act refers to complaints. A person can make a complaint to a public authority if the complainant believes he or she may have been directly affected by an alleged failure of the authority to comply with its approved equality scheme. If the complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint may be brought to the Equality Commission.

8.3 A person wishing to make a complaint that the PBNI has failed to comply with its approved equality scheme should contact:

Equality Manager, 80-90 North Street, Belfast, BT1 1LD, Tel 028 90 26 24 68, Textphone: 028 90 26 24 90, SMS text messages to 07823 884 124, equality@pbni.gsi.gov.uk

8.4 PBNI will in the first instance acknowledge receipt of each complaint within 5 working days.

8.5 The PBNI will carry out an internal investigation of the complaint and will respond substantively to the complainant within one month of the date of receiving the letter of complaint. Under certain circumstances, if the complexity of the matter requires a longer period, the period for response to the complainant may be extended to two months. In those circumstances, the complainant will be advised of the extended period within one month of making the complaint.

8.6 During this process the complainant will be kept fully informed of the progress of the investigation into the complaint and of any outcomes.

8.7 In any subsequent investigation by the Equality Commission, the PBNI will co-operate fully, providing access in a timely manner

to any relevant documentation that the Equality Commission may require.

Similarly, the PBNI will co-operate fully with any investigation by the Equality Commission under sub-paragraph 11 (1) (b) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

8.8 The PBNI will make all efforts to implement promptly and in full any recommendations arising out of any Commission investigation.

Chapter 9

Publication of our equality scheme

(Schedule 9 4. (3) (c))

9.1 PBNI's equality scheme is available free of charge in print form and alternative formats from PBNI's Equality Manager contact detail are recorded in Para 2.6.

9.2 PBNI's equality scheme is published on our website at www.pbni.org.uk.

9.3 The following arrangements are in place for the publication, in a timely manner, of the PBNI equality scheme to ensure equality of access:

- PBNI will make every effort to communicate widely the existence and content of its equality scheme. This may include press releases, prominent advertisements in the press, Internet and direct mail shots to those representing Section 75 groups.
- PBNI will email a link to its approved equality scheme to consultees on its consultation lists. Consultees with no access to e-mail will be notified by letter that the scheme is available on request. PBNI will respond to requests for the equality scheme in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within two weeks.
- The PBNI equality scheme is available on request in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, audio formats (CD, mp3, DAISY) and in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English.
- A simple concise summary version will be available to effectively communicate our equality scheme to children and young people and those with learning disabilities.

9.4 For a list of PBNI stakeholders and consultees please see Appendix 3 of the equality scheme, visit the PBNI website at www.pbni.org.uk or contact the Equality Manager whose contact details are recorded at Para 2.6.

Chapter 10

Review of our equality scheme

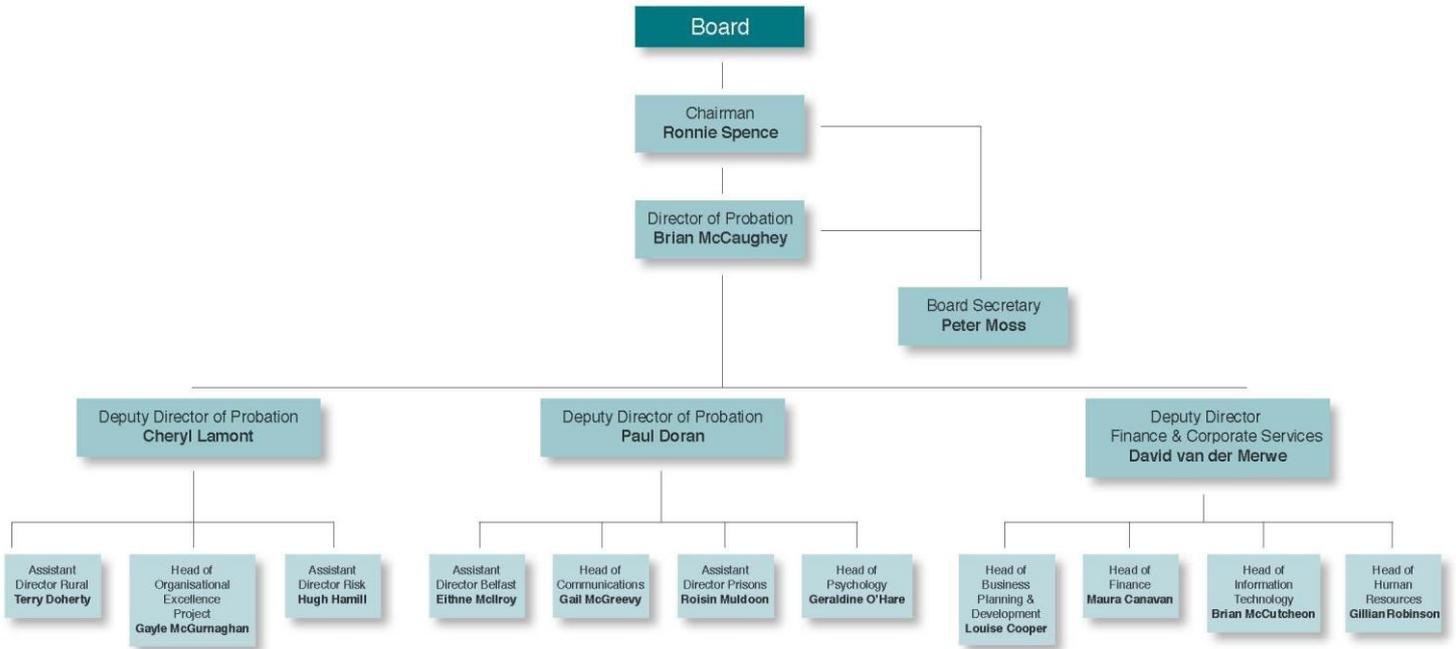
(Schedule 9 8. (3))

10.1 As required by Schedule 9 paragraph 8 (3) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 the PBNI will conduct a thorough review of this equality scheme. This review will take place within five years of submission of this equality scheme to the Equality Commission.

The review will evaluate the effectiveness of the PBNI scheme in relation to the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties relevant to our functions in Northern Ireland.

10.2 In undertaking this review PBNI will follow any guidance issued by the Equality Commission. A report of this review will be made public via the PBNI website and sent to the Equality Commission.

Appendix 1 Organisational chart



Appendix 2 Example groups relevant to the Section 75 categories for Northern Ireland purposes

Please note, this list is for illustration purposes only, it is not exhaustive.

Category	Example groups
Religious belief	Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslims, people of no religious belief; Protestants; Sikh; other faiths. For the purposes of Section 75, the term “religious belief” is the same definition as that used in the <i>Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order</i> . Therefore, “religious belief” also includes any <i>perceived</i> religious belief (or perceived lack of belief) and, in employment situations only, it also covers any “ <i>similar philosophical belief</i> ”.
Political opinion ³	Nationalist generally; Unionists generally; members/supporters of other political parties.
Racial group	Black people; Chinese; Indians; Pakistanis; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Travellers; White people.
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); Trans-gendered people; Transsexual people; Women (including girls).
Marital status	Civil partners or people in civil partnerships; divorced people; married people; separated people; single people; widowed people.
Age	Children and young people; older people.
Persons with a disability	Persons with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.
Sexual orientation	Bisexual people; heterosexual people; gay or lesbian people.

Appendix 3 List of consultees

(Schedule 9 4. (2) (a))

PBNI's list of consultees is indicative and not exhaustive and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains up to date and relevant to our functions and policies.

Addiction NI	CCETSW
Age Concern NI	Challenge For Youth
Age NI	Chief Clerk NI Court Service
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland	Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice NI
Alternatives	Children in Northern Ireland
Altnagelvin Hospitals H&SS Trust	Children's Law Centre
Antrim Counselling Centre	Chinese Welfare Association
An Munia Tober	Church Of Ireland Synod Department
Armagh Travellers Support Group	Citizens Advice Bureau
Antrim Youth Council	Coalition On Sexual Orientation
Artability NI	Coleraine Women's Aid Centre
Ardoyne Youth Club	Coiste Na N- Iar Chimi
Armagh & Dungannon HSS Trust	Committee of the Administration of Justice
Armagh Council (Chair of CSP)	Community Development And Health Network (NI)
Artillery Youth Centre	Community Drugs Awareness (CODA)
Artsekta	Community Focus Learning
Association Of Chief Officers of Voluntary Organisations (NI)	Community Relations Council
Attorney General	Community Safety Unit
Ballynafeigh Community House	Confederation Of British Industry
Barnardos	Conservation Volunteers NI
Belfast Activity Centre	Contact Youth
Belfast Chamber Of Trade and Commerce	Cookstown Migrant Worker Support Programme
Belfast City Hospital HSS Trust	Council For Catholic Maintained Schools
British Deaf Association (NI)	Craigavon Travellers Support Committee
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	CRJI
Belfast Islamic Centre	Crossfire Trust
Belfast Jewish Community	Democratic Unionist Party
Belfast Multi Ethnic	Department Of Education
Belfast YMCA	Department of Justice
Bloomfield Community Association	Deputy Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice NI
Breakthru	Derry Bytes
British Medical Association (NI)	Derry City Council
Carlisle House	Derry Travellers Support Group
Cara-friend	Derry Well Women Centre
Carers Northern Ireland	Director of NI Courts and Tribunals Service
Carnany Community Association	Disability Action

Dismas	Linc Resource Centre
Down's Syndrome Association	Lisburn City Council
Drumcree Community Trust	Lisburn YMCA
Duke Of Edinburgh	Lower Falls Newstart
East Belfast Community Development Agency	Magherafelt Women's Group
East Belfast Mission	MENCAP
Eastern Health And Social Services Board	Methodist Church In Ireland
Edward Street Hostel	Methodist Mission
EMBRACE	Multi-Cultural Resource Centre
Enniskillen Adolescent Partnership	MUST
Equality Commission	National Association Of Probation Officers (NAPO)
Equality Unit Manager, BELB	Nederlandse Vereniging in Noord Ireland
Ethnic Minorities Co-Ordinator	New Life Counselling Service
Extern	Newry And Mourne HSS Trust
Falls Community Council	Newry And Mourne Senior Citizen's Consortium
Family Caring Centre	Newry And Mourne Women
Family Planning Association NI	NEXUS
Federation Of Small Businesses	NI African Cultural Centre
Fermanagh Council	NI Ambulance Service HSS Trust
Fermanagh Trust	NI Anti-Poverty Network
Fermanagh Women's Network	NI Association For Mental Health
First Housing Aid and Support Services	NI Committee, Irish Congress Of Trade Unions
Gay & Lesbian Youth NI	NI Council For Ethnic Minorities
GEMs	NI Council For Voluntary Action
General Council of the Bar of Northern Ireland	NI Court & Tribunals Service
Gingerbread NI	NI Gay Rights Association
Glebeside Community Association	NI Hospice Care
Glebeside Youth Forum	NI Prison Service, HQ
Green Park HSS Trust	NI Statistics And Research Agency
Help The Aged NI	NI Tolerance Education & Cultural Association
Holy Trinity Counselling	NI Women's European Platform
Hope Centre	NIACRO
HSE	NICCY
Hurt NI	NIPS
Include Youth	NIPSA
Indian Community Centre	North & West Housing Ltd
Inner East Youth Project	North Eastern Education And Library Board
Intercomm	North West Community Network
Juvenile Justice Centre	Northern Health And Social Services Board
Kilrea GAC	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Law Society	Northern Ireland Muslim Family Association
Legal Services Commission	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Lesbian Line C/O Carafriend	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
Lighthouse Hostel	Northern Ireland Pakistani Cultural Association

Northern Ireland Policing Board	Simon Community
Northern Trust	Sinn Fein
Northlands Centre	Sperrin Lakeland Senior Citizen's Consortium
NSPCC	Sports Council
Oasis	Springfield Charitable Association
Omagh Women's Area Network	Social Democratic And Labour Party
Opportunity Youth	South & East Belfast HSS Trust
Our Lady of Bethlehem Abbey	South Eastern Education And Library Board
Ocean Youth Trust	South Tyrone Empowerment Programme (STEP)
Office Of The First Minister And Deputy First Minister	Southern Health And Social Services Board
Parents And Professionals And Autism	Southern Health& SCT
Patchwork Project	St Mary's Youth Club
Peninsula Community Transport	St Patrick's Church
Pennyburn Youth Club	St Teresa's Youth Club
PHAB	St Vincent De Paul
Police Ombudsman for NI	Stadium Youth and Community Centre
Police Service for Northern Ireland	Staff Commission For Education And Library Boards
Polish Association Northern Ireland	Star Neighbourhood Centre
Presbyterian Church In Ireland	Stepping Stone Project
Prince's Trust	Stiles Youth Projects
Prison Arts Foundation	Streetbeat Youth Project
Prison Fellowship (NI)	Tar Anall
Prisoner Ombudsman	Terry Enright Foundation
Probation and Welfare Service	The Cedar Foundation
Progressive Unionist Party	The Equality and Human Rights Unit,
PRVIS - Prisoner Release Victim Information Scheme	The First Step, Drop in Centre
Public Prosecution Service	The Link Family Community Centre
Public Prosecution for Northern Ireland	The Rainbow Project
Queen's University Belfast	The Salvation Army HQ
REACT	The Ulster Temple
Royal Hospitals Trust	The Women's Centre
Royal National Institute For Blind (NI)	The Y Zone
Royal National Institute For Deaf People (NI)	Triangle Housing Association
Rural Community Network	Ulster Community & Hospital Trusts
SAI PAK Chinese Community Project	Ulster Quaker Service Committee
SAMM NI - Support after Murder & Manslaughter	Ulster Unionist Party
Save The Children	UNESCO Centre
Shankill Lurgan Community Project	University Of Ulster

Victim Support (NI)	Women's Information Group
Voluntary Services Lisburn	Women's Resource And Development Agency
West Belfast Economic Forum	Women's Support Network
Western Health And Social Services Board	Woodvale Community Centre
West Belfast Parent Youth Support Group	YMCA
Western Education And Library Board	YMCA Londonderry
Western HSCT	Youth Council For NI
Windsor Women's Centre	Youth First Project
Women's Aid	Youth Justice Agency for NI
Women's Aid Craigavon & Banbridge	Youthlink

Appendix 4 Timetable for measures proposed (Schedule 9 4. (3) (b))

Measure	Lead responsibility	Timetable
Section 75 Annual Progress Report [2.7]	Equality Manager and Probation Board	31 August (annually)
Action plan		
Consultation on draft action plan [2.15]	Equality Manager	In line with consultation on equality scheme
Finalised action plan published [2.18]	Equality Manager	April 2012
Actions included in Annual Business Plans [2.5]	Business Planning	April (annually)
Consultation list reviewed and updated [3.4]	Equality Manager	September (annually)
Screening Reports [4.15]	Equality Manager	Quarterly
Review of Equality Monitoring Data Annually [4.31]	Equality Manager	June (annually)
Section 75 training to be completed on the new Equality Scheme [5.4]	Equality Manager	April 2013
PBNI will review public access, in relation to information and services. [6.11]	Equality Manager	June (annually)
Communication of equality scheme [9.3]	Equality Manager	November 2012
Review of equality scheme [10.1]	Equality Manager	Five Year Review

Appendix 5 Glossary of terms

Action Plan

A plan which sets out actions a public authority will take to implement its Section 75 statutory duties. It is a mechanism for the realisation of measures to achieve equality outcomes for the Section 75 equality and good relations categories.

Measures and outcomes

Specific measures to promote equality and good relations for the relevant Section 75 and good relations categories, linked to achievable outcomes, which should be realistic and timely.

Adverse impact

Where a Section 75 category has been affected differently by a policy and the effect is less favourable, it is known as adverse impact. If a policy has an adverse impact on a Section 75 category, a public authority must consider whether or not the adverse impact is unlawfully discriminatory. In either case a public authority must take measures to redress the adverse impact, by considering mitigating measures and/or alternative ways of delivering the policy.

Affirmative action

In general terms, affirmative action can be defined as being anything consistent with the legislation which is necessary to bring about positive change. It is a phrase used in the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (NI) 1998 to describe lawful action that is aimed at promoting equality of opportunity and fair participation in employment between members of the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland.

Audit of inequalities

An audit of inequalities is a systematic review and analysis of inequalities which exist for service users and those affected by a public authority's policies. An audit can be used by a public authority to inform its work in relation to the Section 75 equality and good relations duties. It can also enable public authorities to

assess progress on the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties, as it provides baseline information on existing inequalities relevant to a public authority's functions.

Consultation

In the context of Section 75, consultation is the process of asking those affected by a policy, i.e. service users, staff, the general public for their views on how the policy could be implemented more effectively to promote equality of opportunity across the 9 categories. Different circumstances will call for different types of consultation. Consultations could, for example, include meetings, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires.

Differential impact

Differential impact occurs where a Section 75 group has been affected differently by a policy. This effect could either be positive, neutral or negative. A public authority must make a judgement as to whether a policy has a differential impact and then it must determine whether the impact is adverse, based on a systematic appraisal of the accumulated information.

Equality impact assessment

The mechanism underpinning Section 75, where existing and proposed policies are assessed in order to determine whether they have an adverse impact on equality of opportunity for the relevant Section 75 categories. Equality impact assessments require the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Equality of opportunity

The prevention, elimination or regulation of discrimination between people on grounds of characteristics including sex, marital status, age, disability, religious belief, political opinion, dependants, race and sexual orientation.

The promotion of equality of opportunity entails more than the elimination of discrimination. It requires proactive measures to be taken to secure equality of opportunity between the categories identified under Section 75.

Equality Scheme

A document which outlines a public authority's arrangements for complying with its Section 75 obligations. An Equality Scheme must include an outline of the public authority's arrangements for carrying out consultations, screening, and equality impact assessments, monitoring, training and arrangements for ensuring access to information and services.

Good Relations

Although not defined in the legislation, the Commission has agreed the following working definition of good relations: 'the growth of relations and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms'.

Mainstreaming equality

The integration of equal opportunities principles, strategies and practices into the every day work of public authorities from the outset. Mainstreaming can help improve methods of working by increasing a public authority's accountability, responsiveness to need and relations with the public. It can bring added value at many levels.

Mitigation of adverse impact

Where an equality impact assessment reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories; this is known as mitigating adverse impact.

Monitoring

Monitoring consists of continuously scrutinising and evaluating a policy to assess its impact on the Section 75 categories. Monitoring must be sensitive to the issues associated with human rights and privacy. Public authorities should seek advice from consultees and Section 75 representative groups when setting up monitoring systems.

Monitoring consists of the collection of relevant information and evaluation of policies. It is not solely about the collection of data, it can also take the form of regular meetings and reporting of research undertaken. Monitoring is not an end in itself but provides the data for the next cycle of policy screening.

Northern Ireland Act

The Northern Ireland Act, implementing the Good Friday Agreement, received Royal Assent on 19 November 1998. Section 75 of the Act created the statutory equality duties.

Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency (NISRA)

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is an Executive Agency within the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP). They provide statistical and research information regarding Northern Ireland issues and provide registration services to the public in the most effective and efficient way.

Policy

The formal and informal decisions a public authority makes in relation to carrying out its duties. Defined in the New Oxford English Dictionary as 'a course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government party, business or individual'. In the context of Section 75, the term "policies" covers all the ways in which a public authority carries out or proposes to carry out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. Policies include unwritten as well as written policies.

Schedule 9

Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 sets out detailed provisions for the enforcement of the Section 75 statutory duties, including an outline of what should be included in an Equality Scheme.

Section 75

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act provides that each public authority is required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:-

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status and sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependants and persons without

Without prejudice to these obligations, each public authority in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Section 75 investigation

An investigation carried out by the Equality Commission, under Schedule 9 of the NI Act 1998, arising from the failure of a public authority to comply with the commitments set out in its approved Equality Scheme.

There are two types of Commission investigation, these are as follows:

1. An investigation of a complaint by an individual who claims to have been directly affected by the failure of a public authority to comply with its approved Equality Scheme;
2. An investigation initiated by the Commission, where it believes that a public authority may have failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme.

Appendix 6 Equality Action Plan

Not subject to Equality Commission approval

Identified Inequality	Section 75 Groups	Action	Outcome/Impact	Performance Indicator	Lead Responsibility & Timescale
PBNI introduced equality monitoring of services in 2010. PBNI will continue to gather and analyse this data longitudinally to identify if any differential impacts exist in outcomes for service users.	Race Age Gender Sexual Orientation Disability Faith Marital Status Political Opinion Dependant Status	To conduct longitudinal research leading to an analysis of service users equality data to identify any differential impacts in outcomes experienced by service users.	Identification of differential impacts for equality groups of service users. This information will inform the development of future operational and corporate policy within PBNI.	To publish a research paper that clearly identifies differential impacts if they exist in terms of outcomes for all nine categories identified under section 75.	Head of Business Planning & Development September 2013
PBNI Equality Monitoring data has shown that 37% of offenders have stated that they have one or more disabilities with 23% of all offenders recording that they have a mental health disability. PBNI services users are more likely to have a disability than the general population.	Disability specifically those with learning and mental health disabilities as well as those with literacy and communication disabilities.	A pilot will be undertaken to screen offenders at Pre- Sentence Report stage to identify those with specific learning and or communication difficulties and where individuals are identified, a suitable work plan is established to address their unique supervision needs. Specific training will be given to those involved in the pilot learning disability screening exercise. Operational staff will be provided with disability awareness training especially in the area of mental health.	Identification of offenders with learning and communication disabilities leading to implementation of more effective interventions that address their offending behaviour. Staff will be better equipped to identify offenders that need the assistance of the forensic psychology department.	A pilot learning disability screening exercise to be conducted by PBNI leading to an evaluation and a decision on wider implementation of the programme. All offender facing staff are provided with access to training that assists in raising awareness of mental health disabilities.	Head of Psychology 2011 – 2016 2012 - 2014

Identified Inequality	Section 75 Groups	Action	Outcome/Impact	Performance Indicator	Lead Responsibility & Timescale
Information supplied to service users is not always clear and concise.	Targeted at those with learning disabilities, however this action will benefit all service users.	A review will be carried out of all service leaflets and written and electronic communications and where necessary we will produce of easy read materials for offenders.	Increased effectiveness of our communications with offenders of all abilities leading to a clearer understanding of the requirements of supervision.	Production of all offender aimed literature in easy read format.	Head of Communication supported by Psychology Dept. 2011- 2015
Offenders with learning and communication difficulties struggle with the literacy aspects of PBNI Programmes designed to reduce offending.	Targeted at those with learning disabilities/literacy issues and foreign nationals	PBNI will consider how best to support offenders' with learning and communication difficulties as they are assessed for suitability for PBNI Programmes with consideration given to supporting offenders with literacy and learning disabilities.	Enhance offender participation in programmes.	More offenders successfully completing PBNI accredited programmes.	Head of Psychology 2011 - 2013
Only 15% of social work students in 2010 where male. PBNI's total workforce is currently 70% female and 30% male.	Gender	<p>PBNI will work with social work partners to motivate greater interest in probation work in men.</p> <p>PBNI HR department will identify when recruiting to probation and administrative grades whether affirmative action is required.</p> <p>PBNI will seek to recruit female and minority ethnic Community Service Supervisors.</p>	<p>A workforce that is more reflective of society generally.</p> <p>More women able to avail of Community Service sentences.</p>	<p>We seek to see a percentage increase in the total number of males working for PBNI.</p> <p>The recruitment of female CS supervisors.</p>	Head of Human Resources 2012 - 2016

Identified Inequality	Section 75 Groups	Action	Outcome/Impact	Performance Indicator	Lead Responsibility & Timescale
<p>Equality monitoring data for PBNI's Victim Information Scheme indicates that fewer than expected ethnic minorities, men, gay and disabled people use the scheme.</p>	<p>Race Gender Sexual Orientation Disability Faith</p>	<p>PBNI will raise awareness of our Victims Information Scheme with ethnic minorities, trans-gendered, gay and disabled groups as well as victim organisations generally.</p>	<p>Greater support will be given to some of the most vulnerable people in society through the services offered via PBNI Victims Information Scheme.</p>	<p>Monitoring information will show increased numbers of ethnic minorities, trans-gendered, gay and disabled people using the Victims Information Scheme.</p>	<p>Assistant Director for Victims 2012 -2016</p>

Appendix 7 Good Relations Action Plan

Not subject to Equality Commission approval

Targeting	Action	Outcome/Impact	Performance Indicator	Lead Responsibility & Timescale
Good Relations – Religious, Political and Racial	Convene a Good Relations working group to lead on the implementation of actions designed to progress good relations in the work of PBNI.	A programme of work designed to address good relations with both PBNI staff and service users.	Targets set by the working group are achieved or exceeded.	Deputy Director of Probation
Sectarianism, Racism, Homophobia, Disability, Transphobic and Religious hate crimes.	<p>Hate Crime training will be delivered to staff working with offenders.</p> <p>PBNI will assess if there is a need for a Good Relations/Hate Crime programme/intervention for offenders' in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Seek to identify external funding to support a programme of work with offenders on Hate Crime Prevention.</p>	<p>Staff will be better equipped to challenge attitudes and behaviours rooted in prejudice.</p> <p>By demystifying community stereotypes around difference in interface areas we seek to reduce hate motivated crime in affected communities.</p> <p>Funding will enable PBNI to work in partnership with communities to enhance offender understanding of different communities.</p>	<p>Staff evaluation will show application learning in the workplace.</p> <p>Review will be completed of existing NOMS programmes.</p> <p>Decision made in relation to future implementation in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>An exploration of external funding options will be completed by 2012.</p>	<p>Assistant Director for Urban Region 2011 - 2013</p> <p>Head of Psychology 2012 - 2016</p> <p>Business Planning and Development. 2011-2012</p>
Religious, Political and Racial differences	PBNI to promote the ONE SMALL STEP campaign.	PBNI staff will become more aware of the diversity and inequalities present within Northern Irish society and thereby enhance organisational effectiveness.	All teams will engage with the campaign throughout the life of this plan and an evaluation of the campaign will be conducted as part of the five year review of the effectiveness of the Equality Scheme.	Assistant Director of Probation for Prisons 2011 - 2016

Targeting	Action	Outcome/Impact	Performance Indicator	Lead Responsibility & Timescale
Religious and Political prejudice	Offender programmes will be delivered locally to offenders in community locations across Northern Ireland.	Offenders from differing communities are afforded the opportunity to interact with each other in programmes designed to reduce re-offending behaviour.	Increased awareness and understanding of cultural differences amongst offenders.	Head of Psychology 2011 - 2016
Race	The provision of translation and interpretation services for those who are unable to understand English.	Offenders and Victims who are unable to speak or read English will be able to communicate with Probation Staff.	Translation and interpretation services are available to service users.	Head of Finance 2011-2016
Religious, Political and Racial differences	Ensure each Business Unit and team has an objective and performance measure in place to promote good relations and that progress against objective is monitored and reported on at the end of each financial year.	Greater organisational awareness and understanding of cultural differences; leading to developing better relationships both internally and externally.	Each team will report progress against targets on an annual basis.	Head of Business Planning & Development 2011 - 2016

Appendix 8 Disability Action Plan 2010-2014

*PBNI's Disability Action Plan is included for information purposes - Full version click [here](#)

Action	Timescale	Outcome Performance Indicator
PBNI will implement a programme of equality monitoring designed to understand the disability issues of offenders. Specifically we will seek to understand the extent of cognitive and learning difficulties facing service users.	Year One	Through this research we will discover how PBNI can better promote equality of opportunity in the delivery of our service to disabled people. Initial research indicates that 37% of service users have a disability.
Progress against this Disability Action Plan will be reported to the Probation Board quarterly. PBNI will re-convene the Good Relations Steering group and extend its remit to ensuring progress is maintained under the plan.	Year One Year Two Year Three Year Four	Milestones will be reported quarterly to the Probation Board which will lead to a greater awareness and increased focus on promoting positive attitudes towards people with disabilities at Board level.
Review the Community Service Induction form to establish from the outset if offenders have disabilities hidden or visible so that PBNI can ensure that their community service can be completed successfully and safely.	Year One Year Two	Redraft the Community Service Induction form and offer training on disability awareness to Community Service Supervisors and Probation Service Officers that leads to greater awareness of disability issues and promote positive attitudes towards disabled offenders.
PBNI will review our signage in our reception areas with a view to introducing visual information displays some of which will utilise television displays that portray the work of PBNI in a positive light and assist those with learning disabilities who are unable to read our current information leaflets.	Year Two Year Three Year Four	The introduction of audio visual signage to assist victims & offenders with a range of learning and sensory disabilities to access our offices and services easily and safely. This rolling display will seek to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people to service users and members of the public.
PBNI will seek to identify opportunities to offer supported employment experience to people with disabilities.	Year One Year Two Year Three Year Four	To offer real work experience to disabled people in meaningful roles that will help individuals build confidence and work experience.
PBNI will actively seek to ensure (subject to resources) that all new PBNI offices have ground floor accessible offices for service users and staff or that suitable and accessible lifts are in operation to ensure that our premises are fully accessible.	Year One Year Two Year Three Year Four	All new premises will be fully accessible by both staff and offenders. A plan to address current unsuitable accommodation has been prepared and is being implemented to bring PBNI estate up to suitable standard. This will ensure that people with mobility problems are able to access our premises.
PBNI will seek to work in partnership with all Criminal Justice Organisations to form a Criminal Justice Equality Forum.	Year One Year Two	PBNI will seek to influence partner Criminal Justice Organisations to introduce a Criminal Justice Equality Forum that will have individuals or organisation that represent the interests of disabled people. We will argue to ensure that disabled people are involved in this public life position.

Action	Timeline	Outcome/Performance Indicator
PBNI in the procurement of services will ensure that contractors abide by the terms set out by DFP's Central Procurement Directorate which requires contractors to promote positive attitudes as described by Disability Discrimination Order 2006.	Year One Year Two Year Three Year Four	Contractors must be willing to agree to the terms of our tendering contracts that specifically reference the requirements of the DDO 2006.
We will ensure that under PBNI's new Equality Scheme that all future policies are screened to identify if there are opportunities to promote positive attitude and engagement in public life. PBNI will design and implement new policy screening forms that will include screening questions that address positive attitudes towards disabled people and engagement in public life positions	Year One Year Two Year Three Year Four	By the end of year one PBNI will revise our policy screening forms. Disability will be considered by PBNI policy writers who will seek to identify if there are opportunities to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people.
All staff involved in recruitment and selection will receive specific equality training that will include awareness of steps that are permitted in law to enable the fair participation of disabled people in recruitment and selection procedures.	Year One Year Two	Disabled people will compete for positions with the Probation Board on a fair and equitable basis. PBNI will ensure that our recruitment information encourages disabled people to apply for positions with PBNI.
PBNI will reconvene the Good Relations (Diversity) steering group. This group will represent people from different work areas at a strategic level from across PBNI. This group will consider PBNI's section 75 (2) responsibilities as well as its Disability Action Plan.	Year One Year Two Year Three Year Four	PBNI will seek to identify a person (with an interest or knowledge in disability issues) who will lead on disability issues. The outcome will be to ensure that PBNI maintains focus on promoting positive attitudes toward disabled people.
PBNI's Human Resources Department will revise induction training on Equal Opportunities to specifically raise awareness of our disability duties under DDA	Year One Year Two Year Three Year Four	PBNI induction Equal Opportunities training course will be revised to incorporate disability awareness training.
A bespoke disability awareness course on mental health and specific learning difficulties will be designed and delivered to staff by PBNI Psychology Department and Human Resources will deliver general disability awareness training to staff.	Year Two Year Three	The aim will be to ensure increased awareness of learning disabilities and mental health issues generally. The outcome will be greater responsiveness to clients with mental health and learning disabilities.
PBNI will on a regular basis run articles in our staff magazine 'Probation News' that will seek to raise awareness of various forms of disability including sensory, learning, physical, mental health and long-term illness.	Year One Year Two Year Three Year Four	PBNI will run a minimum of two articles per year in the magazine 'Probation News'.