



28 October 2015

Dear Consultee,

**Update on Equality Screening and Consultations within the Public Prosecution Service (PPS)**

It is important that the PPS keeps those interested in its work regularly informed of what it is doing to assess the impact of its policies as regards equality of opportunity and good relations.

This update lists internal and external policies for which the PPS has carried out a screening exercise over the period 1 July to 30 September 2015. It also includes details of forthcoming, current and closed consultations.

*(a) Screening exercises completed 1 July – 30 September 2015:*

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Screening Outcome</b>
<i>None</i>		

*(b) Forthcoming consultations:*

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
<i>Victims and Witnesses Policy</i>	<i>The revised policy document describes the services PPS provides to victims</i>	<i>Policy currently being developed.</i>

	<i>and witnesses called by the prosecution. It also gives guidance to PPS staff on best practice in the provision of those services.</i>	<i>Initial meetings have taken place and draft document has been produced. Further work being carried out to ensure the document is accessible to all.</i>
<i>Court Witness Expenses Policy</i>	<i>The PPS is required to call the victims and witnesses of crime to court to give evidence in the prosecution of cases. This policy documents the process of inviting witnesses and reimbursing their expenses.</i>	<i>To be incorporated into the revised PPS Victims and Witnesses Policy (see above).</i>
<i>Director's guidance on Prosecutorial fines</i>	<i>Guidance on the procedures and processes which prosecutors must follow in relation to the use of prosecutorial fines, which are an alternative to a court prosecution.</i>	<i>Policy in initial stages of development and discussions on going with DoJ and PPS about implementation date.</i>

*(c) Current consultations:*

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
<i>None</i>		

*(d) Recently closed consultations:*

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
<i>Code for Prosecutors</i>	<i>The Code for Prosecutors, issued under section 37 of the Justice (NI) Act 2002, gives guidance on the general principles to be applied in determining in any case whether criminal proceedings should be brought, what charges should be preferred and how prosecutions should be conducted. It also sets out the standards of conduct that the PPS requires from prosecutors including external Counsel instructed on behalf of the Director.</i>	<i>Consultation now closed.  PPS engaging with stakeholders including Bar Council over issues raised in the consultation.</i>

If you or your organisation is interested in receiving any consultation documents or wish to register an interest in forthcoming work, please contact me stating if you would prefer a hard copy posted to you or an email version, providing your email address. You can also request a copy of the full screening decision on any policy in this way.

You can visit the Public Prosecution Service website at [www.ppsni.gov.uk](http://www.ppsni.gov.uk) to access our equality information and can review current and previous Section 75 reports and policy screening forms (from January 2012). Any consultations undertaken by the PPS will be posted on the PPS website within the 'Consultation' area which is accessible from the home page. Other equality related information is located within the 'Equality' section.

Documents will be made available in alternative formats, for example Braille, audio CD or disk. If you have any requests for alternative formats, or if you wish to make any other comment about this equality work, please contact me through any of the ways set out below. You can also update me of any changes to your contact details that may be required for future correspondence.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Scott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

**Anna Scott**

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