



14 January 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.

The section below provides details of policy work carried out within the PPS from 1 October to 31 December 2014.

#### **Current Policy Work**

This update lists policies both external and internal for which the PPS has carried out a screening exercise. It also includes details of forthcoming, current and closed consultations.

#### **(a) Screening exercises completed 1 October – 31 December 2014:**

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<i>PPS Prosecution Quality Standards</i>	<i>The new PPS Prosecution Quality Standards set out the quality standards against which the public, and particularly those who come into contact with the Service, can assess how we perform.</i>	<i>Screened out</i>

	<i>They apply to all who help to deliver the prosecution service, including public prosecutors and administrative staff, as well as external Counsel who represent the PPS at court.</i>	
--	--	--

**(b) Forthcoming consultations:**

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
<i>PPS Prosecution Quality Standards</i>	<i>The new PPS Prosecution Quality Standards set out the quality standards against which the public, and particularly those who come into contact with the Service, can assess how we perform. They apply to all who help to deliver the prosecution service, including public prosecutors and administrative staff, as well as external Counsel who represent the PPS at court.</i>	<i>Policy in final stages of development before public consultation</i>
<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>Policy in final stages of development.</i>
<i>Victims and Witnesses Policy</i>	<i>The revised policy document describes the services PPS provide to victims and witnesses called by the prosecution. It also gives guidance to PPS staff on best practice in the provision of those services.</i>	<i>Policy in initial stages of development</i>

<i>Court Witness Expenses Policy</i>	<p><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></p> <p><i>To be incorporated in the revised PPS Victims and Witnesses Policy (see above)</i></p>	
--------------------------------------	--	--

**Guidelines on prosecuting cases in Northern Ireland involving electronic communications (Social Media Policy) – Consultation**

As this document has been developed as internal guidance only it was considered that external consultation was not required. The Guidance issued to PPS Legal Staff on 22 December 2014.

**(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>Consultation closed</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<i>None</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,



**Anna Scott**

Equality and Governance Officer  
Central Management Unit  
Public Prosecution Service  
Linum Chambers  
2 Bedford Square  
Bedford Street  
Belfast BT2 7ES

Direct Line: 028 90 544870

Fax: 028 90 544868

Deaf / Hard of Hearing (SMS) 07795 675528

Email: [equality@ppsni.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:equality@ppsni.gsi.gov.uk)