



Equality and Diversity Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group (EDSG) is to lead in the development and implementation of the PPS's equality and diversity and DDA requirements and thereby to provide assurances to the Director and Management Board that the PPS complies with all its statutory obligations in relation to these matters.

Remit of EDSG

1. To provide a forum for the discussion of all aspects of equality and diversity within the PPS and to monitor the implementation of the commitments given in the Equality Scheme and Equality Action Plan.
2. To contribute to, develop and review any strategies, policies or action plans required to ensure that equality and diversity become an integral part of the PPS's procedures and services.
3. To take forward the PPS Disability Action Plan and report on progress on a regular basis.
4. To ensure that relevant equality screening mechanisms are in place so that equality impact assessment becomes an integral and early part of policy development within PPS.
5. To promote equality and diversity and disability issues within the organisation and raise the awareness of staff.
6. To ensure that relevant support and guidance is provided to local Equality Officers.
7. To ensure that stakeholder feedback is used effectively in the development of the PPS Equality Agenda.
8. To consider the PPS response to any consultations, reports received from the Equality Commission or other oversight body and make recommendations to the People and Resources Committee.

9. To analyse data and information on equality and diversity issues as required.
10. To report regularly to the PPS People and Resources Committee
11. To undertake any other tasks as agreed by senior management and / or the Management Board.
12. To take forward agreed actions arising from the NICS Diversity Champions Network (SAD Resources and Change to attend).

Membership

- Senior Assistant Director, Resources and Change (Chair)
- Head of Policy and Information Unit
- Head of Finance
- Senior Public Prosecutor, Western and Southern Region
- Public Prosecutor, Belfast and Eastern Region
- Deputy Principal, Resource Management Team
- Representative from Victim and Witness Care Unit
- Equality and Governance Officer

Accountability

The EDSG is authorised by the Management Board to:

- Investigate any activity within its terms of reference.
- Seek any information that it requires from any employee of the Service and all employees are directed to cooperate with any request made by the Committee.

The EDSG is responsible and accountable to the PPS People and Resources Committee. All decisions taken by the EDSG will be subject to review by the Committee.

The People and Resources Committee will report to and/or make recommendations to the Senior Management Group and / or Management Board on key issues arising from the work of the EDSG.

Working Groups

EDSG may establish working groups or project teams to assist in the delivery of their objectives and will agree terms of reference for all new groups established.

Operating Procedures

Attendance

In the event that an EDSG member is unavailable to attend a meeting, there is no requirement for deputies to attend.

Other members of staff from within the Service may be called to attend meetings on an ad hoc basis.

Support

The EDSG will be provided with secretariat support by Policy and Information Unit.

Business

The EDSG will meet quarterly, or more regularly should the need arise.

The agenda will be prepared by the Equality and Governance Officer (with input from individual members as required), subject to the approval of the EDSG Chair.

All papers for consideration by EDSG are required to be with the Secretariat at least seven days prior to a meeting for distribution to members. If papers are not sent to the Secretariat in time or are incomplete they may be held over for the following meeting.

Minutes

The business conducted by EDSG, together with decisions reached and actions required, are recorded in minutes prepared by the Secretariat.

Draft minutes will normally be available for approval within five working days of the meeting. Minutes should include a list of the agreed action points.

The EDSG Chair will:

- Provide final approval of the minutes of each meeting;
- Report to the People and Resources Committee on the work of the EDSG; and

- Submit the minutes of the EDSG meeting to the People and Resources Committee for noting.

The Equality and Governance Officer will also prepare a short written update, including an outline of progress to date, key issues etc., for senior management. Regular updates will also be provided for the PPS Staff Brief as required.

Approved minutes will be made available to all staff via the PPS intranet.

Review

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis, which will include the membership of the Group.