

PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

COMPLETED BY PROBATION BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Title of Policy: **Reduction in Enhanced Combination Order as a result of Budget Management Measures (2023-2024)**

JUNE 2023

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

- between person of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation.
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and,
- between persons with dependants and persons without¹.

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

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

Introduction

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

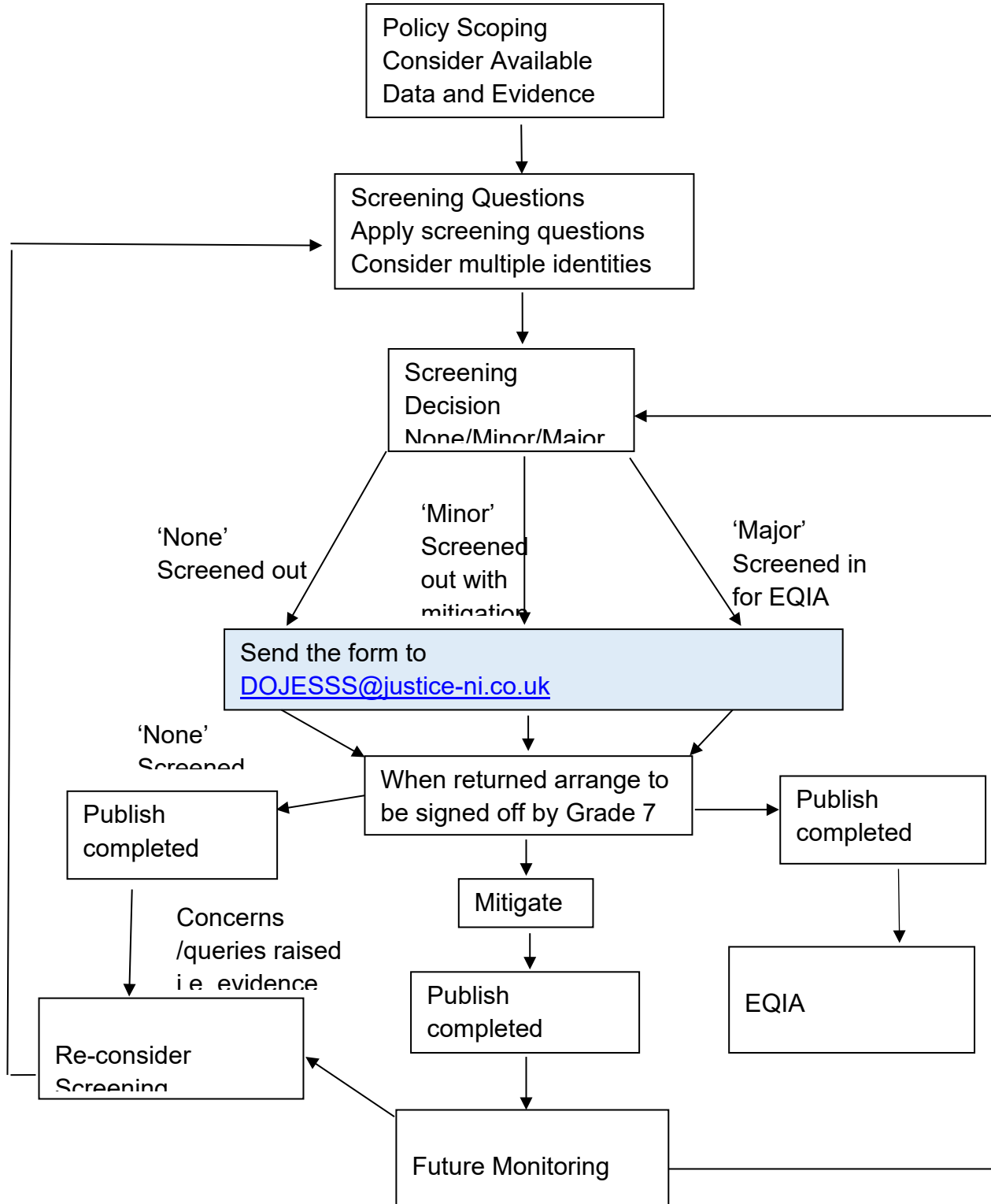
Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.

Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

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

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

A screening flowchart is provided below.



Part 1. Policy scoping

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

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

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

Reduction of funding for Enhanced Combination Orders (ECOs) where they operate – in Ards and Armagh / South Down; and Northwest (Londonderry, Limavady and Strabane)

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

Revised.

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

The Department of Justice (DoJ) have issued a draft budget in May 2023, which has a significant shortfall against PBNI's estimated requirement. In order to live within the reduced budget allocations, PBNI's Board have approved a number of proposals which will impact on service users, staff, and stakeholders.

This includes reducing the funding for operation and support promotion of Enhanced Combinations Orders (ECOs).

The budget allocation for 2023/2024 is £20,341, which represents a shortfall of £1,463, a cut of 6.2%. The budget is for 2023/2024 only.

To live within the assigned budget, PBNI's management team and board considered a number of options, which were considered against the following categories:

- Impact on the organisation

- Impact on staff
- Impact on Service Users
- Impact on Public Safety.

Consideration of our Section 75 obligations on the impact of equality of opportunity and good relations are also being considered as part of the decision making process in the management of our budget.

This Equality Screening is an assessment of any impact on equality of opportunity and / or good relations and so determine whether an Equality Impact Assessment is required, as a result of the budget measures referred to above. .

ECOs have been promoted through the courts as an alternative to short prison sentences as part of a five stage pilot programme. They have been available in two areas as part of this pilot. The first roll out stage was initiated in Ards and Armagh / South Down in 2015; and the second stage of the roll out was in Northwest (Londonderry, Limavady and Strabane) in 2018. The ECO pilot was to continue to a further 3 areas: Antrim, Ballymena, and Coleraine; then Omagh, Enniskillen and Dungannon, and finally, Belfast, Lisburn, and Craigavon.

The objective of an ECO is to divert individuals who have offended from short term custodial sentences by offering sentencers an existing community option in a more intensive package with a focus on rehabilitation, reparation, restorative practice, and desistance from crime and support with family and / or parenting issues.

In both the areas that ECO operate, there are currently 188 Service Users subject to an ECO, and this accounts for 4% of PBNI's overall caseload.

The reduction of funding for ECOs means that we would stop the delivery of Enhanced Combination Orders, except for Services Users with ECOs that are less than six months old or assessed as very high risk. This would require all current ECOS that have run for more than 6 months to receive a reduced level of support and contact from Probation staff. The reduction in ECOs will allow for the release of Probation Officers, Probation Service Officers, Area Managers and Administrative staff to general field teams to fill outstanding vacancies.

During the full duration of the pilot, there have been over 800 service users who have received an ECO as an alternative to a short custodial sentence.

This in itself will entail the redeployment of staff under PBNI's Mobility and Transfer Policy.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

No. The profile of Service Users generally, from the data we hold are that they are male; the majority do not have dependants; they are White; single; heterosexual. A significant percentage indicate that they have mental health issues.

The profile of Service Users in receipt of an Enhanced Combination Order is similar to the profile of Service Users generally.

There is likely to be a negative impact on a Section 75 group, i.e. men generally, as the likelihood of a Service User with an ECO will be male, and if instead of an ECO being awarded, a short custodial sentence is given, then there will be a negative impact on the life and opportunities of the Service User, which can potentially be better served by way of the ECO.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

NIO provided Indicative Resource DEL Budget 2023-24 for Northern Ireland on 4 April 2023. Following this, the Department of Justice Senior Management Team agreed the allocation of indicative budget to Core Directorates, Agencies and NDPBs.

PBNI's Senior Leadership Team have developed the draft budget, providing recommendations for the management of the budget for 2023/2024, which were reluctantly approved by PBNI's Board on 26 May 2023. This has included the reduction of funding for ECOs.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

Department of Justice

Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI)

Implementation factors

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

If yes, are they (please delete as appropriate)

Legislative

There are no legislative issues as a result of stopping the delivery of ECOs, with the exception of those that are less than six months old or assessed as very high risk.

Main stakeholders affected

The overall number of ECOs awarded is relatively small in relation to the overall number and range of orders within PBNI caseload. PBNI will still support Community Service Orders which in the main, are alternatives to custodial sentences. Currently, 388 of our Service Users are in receipt of a Community Service Order.

The main stakeholders affected are Service Users at risk of being sentenced for a short custodial period in the future; and the Service Users who will receive a reduced contact service for the remainder of their ECO.

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

- Staff

Staff who work in the ECO teams in each of the two geographical regions will be impacted by the stopping of new ECOs, and reduction of support for all but by exception.

A number of staff (4 FTE Probation Officer grade) will be retained to deliver a slimmed down ECO programme; and those staff who are surplus, will be required to be redeployed. They will not be made redundant, nor will any demotions or loss of salary result. It intended that they will be able to be redeployed to vacancies in the operational field teams.

The majority are female, community background profile is even; they are White and based on current information, they may have caring responsibilities.

Measures to mitigate any impact on staff include redeploying staff to similar posts and to ensuring that any additional costs due to mileage are compensated.

- Service users

People going through the justice system, who are at risk of being awarded a custodial sentence of 12 months or less, will no longer benefit from an alternative to the custodial sentence in the current areas the pilot programme operates.

The further potential roll out of the programme may also be negatively impacted, if the roll out is slowed down, or if ultimately, the pilot does not restart.

- Stakeholders - Other public sector organisations

Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service (NICTS) and the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) are potentially impacted by PBNI's inability to take on new ECOs, in particular.

The NIPS is potentially the most likely to be impacted. ECOs provide an alternative to short custodial sentences. Therefore where the alternative is not available to the sentencing judge, this may result in a custodial sentence, therefore increasing the prison population.

- Community and Voluntary organisations

There are a number of Community and Voluntary Organisations, commissioned to enhance access to a range of support services for those people in receipt of ECOs.

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- **what are they?**

- Mobility and Transfer Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Grant Funding policy
- PBNI Estate and ICT strategies
- PBNI Practice Standards
- Problem Solving Justice 5 Year Strategic Plan October 2020

- **who owns them?**

PBNI

Department of Justice

Available evidence

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

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

Religious belief evidence / information:

Service users - See Appendix 1: Section 1

The majority of service users have not supplied information regarding religious belief. Of the 42.8% that have supplied information, 18.9% are Roman Catholic and 13.0% are Protestant. No other significant groups are indicated.

Of the Service Users with ECOs, we do not have information which would indicate any deviance from the general service user profile.

Staff – See Appendix 1: Section 2

51% of our staff indicate they are Protestant and 43%, Roman Catholic, with 6% citing non-determined as their religious belief.

Political Opinion evidence / information:

Service users - See Appendix 1: Section 1

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

Staff – See Appendix 1: Section 2

40% of our staff have not disclosed their political opinion, 30% said they have no political opinion, 11% state they are nationalist and 7% are unionist.

Racial Group evidence / information:

Service users - See Appendix 1: Section 1

Of the 43% of Service users we hold monitoring information on, the majority (39.4%) have stated their racial group as White with less than 1% in any other racial group.

Of the Service Users with ECOs, we do not information which would indicate any deviance from the general service user profile.

Staff –See Appendix 1: Section 2

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

Age evidence / information:

Service users - See Appendix 1: Section 1

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

The majority of our Service users are aged 30-39 (34.8%), with less than 2% under 20; 11.4% 20-24; 15.7% are 25-29; 19.1% are 40-49; 10.8% are 50-59/ and 6.1% are over 60 years old.

Of the Service Users with ECOs, we do not information which would indicate any deviance from the general service user profile.

Staff – See Appendix 1: Section 2

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

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

Marital Status evidence / information:

Service users - See Appendix 1: Section 1

Of the 42.7% of Service Users, generally, we have monitoring information from, the majority are Single – never married (30.8%) and less than 4% are in other categories, including divorced or dissolved civil partnerships, married, separated, or widowed.

Of the Service Users with ECOs, we do not information which would indicate any deviance from the general service user profile.

Staff –See Appendix 1: Section 2

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

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

PBNI acknowledge that the current monitoring form, has placed Transgender in the incorrect monitoring category and is working to address this.

Service users - See Appendix 1: Section 1

Of the 42.7% of Service Users, generally, who responded to this area of the monitoring record, 37.4% stated they were heterosexual.

Of the Service Users with ECOs, we do not information which would indicate any deviance from the general service user profile.

Staff –See Appendix 1: Section 1

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

Men and Women generally evidence / information:

Service users - See Appendix 1: Section 1

The majority of Service Users are male. Over 89% of our Service Users are male.

Of the Service Users with ECOs, we do not information which would indicate any deviance from the general service user profile.

Staff – See Appendix 1: Section 2

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

Therefore these changes will affect this group disproportionately.

The majority of service users are male (89.9%).

Disability evidence / information:

Service Users - See Appendix 1: Section 1

Of the 43% of Service Users, who responded to this area of the monitoring record, 24.6% stated they had a disability. The majority of those with a disability had a mental health condition (15.7%)

Staff – See Appendix 1: Section 2

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

Dependants' evidence / information:

Service users - See Appendix 1: Section 1

43% of service users stated their dependant responsibilities. 29.3% said they had none. 7.9% said they had care of a child and 3.4% had responsibility for care of an elderly person or a person with a disability.

Impacts on Children

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

Staff – See Appendix 1: Section 2

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

Needs, experiences, and priorities

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

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

1. Religious belief

Not applicable

2. Political Opinion

Not applicable

3. Racial Group

Not applicable

4. Age

Not applicable

5. Marital status

Not applicable

6. Sexual orientation

Not applicable

7. Men and Women Generally

Service Users – current and potential

Nearing 90% of service users generally are male that need probation support to complete their court orders. The Service Users with ECOs which are less than six months old; or assessed as very high risk, will continue to benefit for the enhanced services and support associated with the ECO pilot. There are approximately 122 Service Users who will receive reduced contact. It is not possible to fully assess the impact of reduced contact with this group of people, however it is not considered that any impact would be major.

However, the impact of the decision to stop new ECOs, will impact on anyone subject to sentencing who may have received a short custodial sentence where the ECO was available as an alternative.

Staff

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

As a result of this budget, with the reduction in some services, PBNI will implement its Mobility Policy, whereby it may be a requirement to move work location. This can impact on women who have caring responsibilities, in the main. The mitigation against any detrimental impact is that we will first seek volunteers for moves to new locations; and secondly that a travel allowance is paid to compensate for any additional travel costs.

8. Disability

While statistically, our records show that 24.6% of our service users have a disability, feedback from Service User Groups and from our Probation Officers, indicate that the majority of our Service Users have poor mental health condition(s); and largely have

experienced negative trauma in their lives. These combined needs, mean that the management of Service Users during the period of their licences is often complex due to the level of support required.

The impact of this budget, whereby support services which PBNI bought in from Community and Voluntary Sector to speed up access to addiction and other such services, are reduced, may have a detrimental impact on our Service Users.

Mitigation in respect of this decision in the budget, is that the budget is for one year only; that our Probation Services Officers, will provide as much in house support to Service Users as possible; and the service users will be referred to other community supports.

We do not hold any information on those Services Users with ECOs, that is not reflective of the general profile of Service Users.

9. Dependants

Not applicable

PBNI do not monitor any impact on children; however up to 100 service users are referred to Barnardos each year to complete parenting work. This will cease, with budget reduction to ECO's.

Do we have any information on the Sus with ECOs in relation to family status?

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance.
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them.
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged.
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities.
- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review.
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible.
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures.
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people.
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

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

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

The reduction in funding for ECOs are likely to have the following impact:

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

None

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

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

None

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

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

None

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

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

None

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

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**:

None

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

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**:

None

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

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

The majority of Service Users are male. The proposed Reductions in service will impact this group, however the impact is likely to be minor as the service and support for Service Users will continue for those under 6 months and those who are very high risk.

The main focus of an ECO is to provide an alternative to a short custodial sentence. The ECO provided opportunity and support for the Service User in receipt of an ECO to remain in the community, potentially, remaining in employment, the normal home place, and benefit from support from family and friends. It would only be where the alternative to a custodial sentence no longer exists, this may therefore mean increased custodial sentences, and the negative impact this will likely have on individual Service Users. PBNI are not advocating the ceasing of ECOs at this time.

Staff

The majority of PBNI staff are female, therefore the impact of staffing reductions required will affect this group disproportionately.

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

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

Service Users

Reductions in support services for mental health and addiction issues could impact on Service Users with a mental health disability.

Staff

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

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

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

Service Users

Reductions may be required in relation to family support schemes to support families through the voluntary sector which will impact dependents of service users.

Staff

There are no indications in a negative impact on staff due to having dependants or none. Any issues in relation to caring responsibilities that affect relocation, will be considered fully as part of the redeployment process.

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

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

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

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Service Users

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

Staff

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

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons

Service Users

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

Staff

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

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons

Service Users

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

Staff

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

Age - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Service Users

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

Staff

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

Marital Status - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons

Service Users

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

Staff

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

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Service Users

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

Staff

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

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Service Users

Budget proposals will likely impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group if they are exposed to short custodial sentence, when an ECO could potentially have allowed the Service User to remain in the community, in employment and retain their accommodation.

Staff

Although the majority of staff affected by the Budget proposals are women, there should not be a negative impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this Section 75 group as all staff will be relocated to alternative roles in generic or specialist teams.

Disability - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Service Users

Budget proposals may impact on promotion of equal opportunity for this group however the services that are being reduced, for example enhanced Addiction Services, are supplied by the Health Trusts.

Staff

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

Dependants - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

Service Users

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

Staff

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

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

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

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

None

What is the level of impact?

Minor / Major / **None** (circle as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

None

What is the level of impact?

Minor / Major / **None**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

None

What is the level of impact?

Minor / Major / **None**

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

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

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

The indicative budget will not provide opportunity to promote good relations for Service Users or Staff.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

The indicative budget will not provide opportunity to promote good relations for Service Users or Staff.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details:

If No, provide reasons:

The indicative budget will not provide opportunity to promote good relations for Service Users or Staff.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

PBNI works with service users from all Section 75 groupings. Reduction in service has the potential to impact across the groupings, but as PBNI has a predominantly male service user base it has the potential to have a greater impact with this grouping.

Similarly any internal staffing reductions are likely to have a greater impact among women.

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

Mitigations are in place for both Service Users and Staff to ensure that there is limited impact from the reduction of ECOs.

Where a short custodial sentence is awarded when the alternative ECO is not available, it is likely to affect white males aged between 30 to 39 years. While the majority of our Service Users who have provided information on Dependants, state they do not have any, there will be Service Users who have dependents and the impact of custodial sentences on parenting will be negatively affected.

Part 3. Screening decision

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

Screened Out – No EQIA

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

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

[We will continue to monitor the impacts on Section 75 groups and try to enhance our monitoring information for Service Users.](#)

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

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

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

Mitigation

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

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

PBNI is not able to adjust the budget, however the options considered to be able to live within allocated budget, were taken considering impact on organisation; staff; Service Users and Public Safety; as well as the equality impacts of the budget management decisions.

In devising the policy to stop new ECOs and reduce the management of ECOs, PBNI sought to mitigate any significant negative impact by continuing to support Service Users with ECOs of less than six months or those Service Users assessed as very high risk. The remaining Service Users with ECOs will continue to have contact, however it will not be at the enhanced level.

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

Timetabling and prioritising

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

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

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

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

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

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

If yes, please provide details.

The Budget may be affected by any decisions of Government during 2023/2024.

Part 4. Monitoring

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

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

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

Further advice on monitoring can be found at: [ECNI Monitoring Guidance for Public Authorities](#)

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Jill Grant/Catherine Sweeney
Position/Job Title: Assistant Director/Head of HR and OD
Date: 26 June 2023 (Reviewed January 2024)