Invest NI Section 75 Screening

Summary of Policy Proforma Invest NI
TITLE: Contactability Policy

Invest NI is committed to achieving a successful economy in Northern Ireland which will provide equal opportunities for all. It is fully mindful of its responsibilities across the spectrum of Equality, Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy and Human Rights.

Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 requires Invest NI, in carrying out all its functions, powers and duties, 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 or sexual orientation;

- between men and women generally;

- between persons with a disability and persons without

  - to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people,
  - to encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and

- between persons with dependents and persons without.

What does this policy/programme aim to achieve for the customer? (who does it mainly affect)?	As a customer facing organisation it is important that businesses and stakeholders can access the right people in our teams and that we respond quickly and effectively when contacted. We know from our client satisfaction surveys that one of the key drivers of satisfaction is our ability to "respond to queries within a reasonable timeframe" and that recorded messages and slow response to emails are major irritants to our customers.
	This policy sets out a proposed Invest NI approach to effective communications through telephone and email to set a standard that is consistent across the entire organisation. The aim is to be responsive to customer needs and also to inform customers when staff are not in the office and to offer alternative points of assistance.
What does this policy/programme aim to achieve for Invest NI? (provide the main objectives).	The objectives for Invest NI are to - establish a common standard across Invest NI to respond to telephone and email contact; - establish a common standard across Invest NI on the use of voicemail and out of office messages on outlook;

	- establish a common standard across Invest NI for staff who are issued with a mobile / blackberry for business purposes.
Where did the policy/programme originate? (ie is this solely an Invest NI programme or are we working in partnership with any other department/ organisation ?)	The policy originated from feedback from Client Satisfaction Surveys and from internal feedback on the inconsistent behaviours of staff. Client feedback suggested that it was hard to get in contact with the right person and that in some cases Invest NI was slow to respond. Internal feedback highlighted a range of issues including some members of staff using voicemail to screen calls, staff not using or personalizing voicemail, inconsistent use of out of office messages, staff developing their own email signatures and staff not making available their mobile number when out of the office on business.
How is this policy /programme delivered or implemented?(ie by delivery agents, client executives, senior management, other agencies?)	The policy was developed by CCMU in conjunction with TMT and by reviewing best practice in customer service organisations eg the review determined that one private sector organisation had a policy of returning phone calls within 2 hours. The proposals were discussed at Senior Management and a draft copy of the policy was provided to Invest NI NIPSA representatives. Invest NI Senior Management carefully considered the requirement to contact key client facing staff at home when an urgent issue arose. It was discussed that for an individual member of staff this will not be a common occurrence and the staff member should mitigate the circumstances through improved communications with for example the Press Office if they know a critical piece of bad news is going to be announced. This situation normally applies to closure / redundancy announcements. If a company announces major bad news which is likely to attract media attention, and Invest NI has not been notified in advance then Invest NI has a requirement to brief the Minister's Office in advance of potential media interviews. This policy seeks to address this issue by having a fast and efficient means to respond. After initial discussion at Senior Management Team all Directors / Head of Divisions were asked to personally brief their teams before the policy was launched in Core Brief in January 2010.
What are the constraints on this policy/programme? (budgetary, legislative, EU directives etc).	N/A
How does Invest NI monitor the delivery of this policy/programme?	Directors / Heads of Division are monitoring email signature / use of voice mail / out of office messages within their respective teams. CCMU will undertake regular audits on the use of voicemail and personalisation of messages.
What other feedback, research, consultation or additional information is available to assess and screen the impact of this	Client Customer Satisfaction Survey.

policy/programme? (ie consultative reports, evaluations, surveys, complaints ,monitoring etc).	
Are any groups specifically targeted through this policy/programme? If so please detail which groups (e.g. young men, older people or people from ethnic minority backgrounds etc).	No

Equality Evidence Matrix

1. Is there any evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake by different groups?

	Yes (please specify)	No	Not known
Religious belief		X	
Political opinion		X	
Racial group		X	
Age		X	
Marital status		X	
Sexual orientation		X	
Gender		X	
Disability		X	
Dependency		X	

Please Comment:

2. Is there evidence or indications that different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this policy issue?

	Yes (please specify)	No	Not known
Religious belief		x	
Political opinion		x	
Racial group		x	
Age		x	
Marital status		x	
Sexual orientation		x	
Gender		x	
Disability		x	
Dependency		x	

Please Comment:

3. Have consultations/research with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that policies of this type create problems that are specific to them? (The user engagement guide and protocol provide useful support.)

	Yes (please specify)	No
Religious belief		x
Political opinion		x
Racial group		x
Age		x
Marital status		x
Sexual orientation		x
Gender		x
Disability		x
Dependency		x

Please Comment:

a) List the organizations/groups/individuals both internal and external, that you contacted during the development of the policy

Internal consultation with senior management who briefed their teams. Draft policy provided to NIPSA representative by HR Director.

b) Specify how comments were incorporated into the final draft policy

NIPSA representative raised issues of out of hours contact for staff and provision of home numbers. It was clarified that providing home numbers was only a requirement for senior staff from Grade 6 and above and that contacting key staff outside of business hours was for critical business issues only.

c) If ideas from groups weren't included please indicate why not

4. In relation to implementing this policy, is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations by altering the policy or by working with others in Government or in the larger community?

Yes ☐   No ☒ X

If Yes, please comment:

5. Have you identified opportunities to:
a) promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;

b) encourage participation by disabled people in public life?

> **Please Specify:**
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6. Monitoring Information: What data will be required to ensure effective monitoring of the policy following implementation?

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7. Have you any other comments on the policy and/or screening exercise?

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Summary of Screening

Section 75 Category	Is there any evidence of potential under-representation of any Section 75 groups in this policy/programme?	Is there any evidence that people from any S75 groups have any issues / difficulties /problems with this policy/programme?	In your assessment is any further additional action required to address any under representation or problems associated with this policy/programme?	If yes, is an Equality Impact Assessment required to further assess the impact of the policy/programme on this group? Give reasons for your answer
Religion	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	
Political Opinion	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	
Age	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	
Gender	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	
Disability	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	
Sexual Orientation	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	
Dependants	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	
Marital Status	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	
Racial Group	YES/NO	YES/NO	YES/NO	

Human Rights Impact Assessment

Articles as identified by European Convention of Human Rights.
• Article 2 - Right to life • Article 3 - Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment • Article 4 - Prohibition of slavery and forced labour • Article 5 - Right to liberty and security • Article 6 - Right to fair and public trial • Article 7 - Right to no punishment with law • Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence • Article 9 - Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion • Article 10 - Right to freedom of expression • Article 11 - Rights to freedom of assembly and association • Article 12 – Right to marry and to found a family • Article 14 – The prohibition of discrimination • Protocol 1 Article 1 – Protection of Property • Protocol 1 Article 2 - Right to education

Definitions of degree of risk of infringement of each article:

High risk – It is foreseeable that this policy is very likely to breach this Article.
Medium risk – This policy is likely, in certain circumstances, to breach this Article.
Low risk – It is possible, though very unlikely, that this policy will breach this Article.

1. Indicate any potential Human Rights implications associated with this policy, the perceived degree of risk (see above) and who the victim may be.

	Has this policy the potential to infringe the rights (Please Tick)		If yes indicate here the degree of risk – High, Medium or Low (See definitions above)	If yes indicate here who the potential victim(s) would be
	Yes	No		
Article 2		X		
Article 3		X		
Article 5		X		
Article 6		X		
Article 8		X		
Article 9		X		
Article 10		X		
Article 11		X		
Article 12		X		
Article 14*		X		
Article 1 of Protocol 1		X		
Article 2 of Protocol 1		X		

Finally are there any other ways in which Invest NI might be able to improve this policy/programme area in terms of improving the equality of opportunity? (ie conducting any further consultations, gathering monitoring data, liaising with other departments or organisations etc.)

Summary of Decision

Name(s) of Screening Personnel: Michael BURNS

Role:

Decision to Conduct Equality Impact Assessment: YES / NO:

Date: 20/04/10

Signed: (Screening Personnel): Michael D Burns

Approved: (Director): Grade 6
Alison Gowdy

Alison Gowdy