



Disability Action Plan

Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland

April 2014 – March 2017

Drawn up in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Order (Northern Ireland) 2006

This document is available in a range of formats on request. Please contact us with your requirements.

The Equality Officer

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I. Introduction

I.1 Under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI) is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life ('the disability duties').

Under Section 49B of the DDA 1995, CJI is also required to submit to the Equality Commission a disability action plan showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions.

I.2 The promotion of disability equality is in line with our corporate values, which are

- Independence;
- Impartiality;
- Honesty;
- Integrity;
- Respect;
- Openness; and
- Robustness.

We cannot act in accordance with these values without respecting the rights of disabled people. Any commitment made by CJI as part of this disability action plan includes those people living with disabilities who consider themselves to be victims of the Northern Ireland conflict. CJI is committed to implementing effectively the disability duties and this disability action plan. We will allocate sufficient resources (in terms of people, time and money) in order to implement effectively this plan and, where appropriate, build objectives and targets relating to the disability duties into corporate and annual operating plans.

We will also put appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that the disability duties are complied with and this disability action plan effectively implemented. We will ensure the effective communication of the plan to staff and to providing all necessary training and guidance for staff on the disability duties and the implementation of the plan.

Responsibility for implementing, reviewing and evaluating this disability action plan and the point of contact within the CJI is:

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CJI will communicate the disability action plan to all staff. The plan will be made available via the CJI Quality Management System (QMS) and all staff will be made aware of its existence. Internal arrangements for compliance and implementation of the plan, together with dealing with and reporting on feedback on the plan will be the responsibility of the CJI Chief Executive Officer.

- 1.3 We confirm our commitment to submitting an annual progress report on the implementation of this plan to the Equality Commission and carrying out a five-year review of this plan, or plans, submitted to the Equality Commission over the five-year review period.

A copy of this plan, our annual progress to the Equality Commission and our five-year review of this plan will be made available on our website <http://www.cjini.org>

1.4 **Functions and Purpose of CJI**

CJI is an independent, non-departmental public body (NDPB), funded by the Department of Justice. In addition to its planned inspection programme the Minister of Justice has powers to request that the Chief Inspector undertakes specific pieces of work. Inspectors are empowered to require documents to be produced and to enter premises for the purpose of inspection at any reasonable hour.

CJI's vision is summed up as 'A better justice system for all'. By that we mean a criminal justice system that works smoothly and efficiently, protecting everyone, working to reduce crime and helping to put offenders back on the right track so that they will not offend again; and a system that does all that with absolute fairness, promotes equality and human rights and is responsive to the real concerns of the community. A justice system that can do those things is the foundation for a peaceful and cohesive community, and a prerequisite for health and prosperity.

That vision requires the collaboration of all the agencies of the criminal justice system and of voluntary sector, political and community-based organisations to bring it about. CJI contributes to it by conducting inspections of individual agencies and cross-cutting thematic reviews of aspects of the criminal justice system.

The CJI mission is to work closely with the inspected agencies in a professional and mature way. To maintain our robustness and independence producing relevant, respected inspection reports that add value to the CJS and enhance the public's experience of contact with every part of the criminal justice system.

CJI inspects for improvement in the pursuit of excellence. Inspection processes examine organisations for strengths and areas for improvement. Our reports will make recommendations designed to help an organisation to improve in any aspect of its performance. Improvement covers all the dimensions of the inspection framework. Inspection is not a mechanical process. The collection of data is essential and there will be factual observations to be made in the course of an inspection. Analysis of the data is an important element of any inspection so that scope for improvement can be identified.

CJI conducts several categories of inspection.

Agency-specific Inspections. These can focus on the organisation themselves or the services they provide.

Thematic Inspections. These are cross cutting inspections of how a particular service is dealt with by all or relevant parts of the criminal justice system.

Announced Inspections of prisons, prison escort arrangements, police custody suites, court cells, juvenile justice centre, offender hostels and community restorative justice schemes.

Unannounced Inspections of prisons, prison escort arrangements, police custody suites, court cells, juvenile justice centre, offender hostels and community restorative justice schemes.

Reviews/Inspections requested by the Minister of Justice. These are conducted under S47.4 of the Justice Act 2002 and can relate to any matter relating to the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland (apart from a matter relating to a court or tribunal).

Action Plan/Follow-up Reviews. These are normally conducted 12-18 months after the original inspection and are usually short reports to assess progress against accepted recommendations.

1.5 **Public Life Positions**

CJI strives to ensure the full participation of disabled people in all aspects of its work and seeks, through inspections, to promote the participation of disabled people in the criminal justice system. CJI's Equality Scheme (<http://www.cjini.org/CJNI/equality>) outlines how we promote disability equality across all areas of our work, and our website contains full details of our scheme, related action plans and progress reports.

On behalf of Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland and our staff we are pleased to support and endorse this equality scheme which has been drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Commission guidelines.

Brendan McGuigan



Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice

James Corrigan



Deputy Chief Inspector and Chief Executive

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Date: 1 December 2014

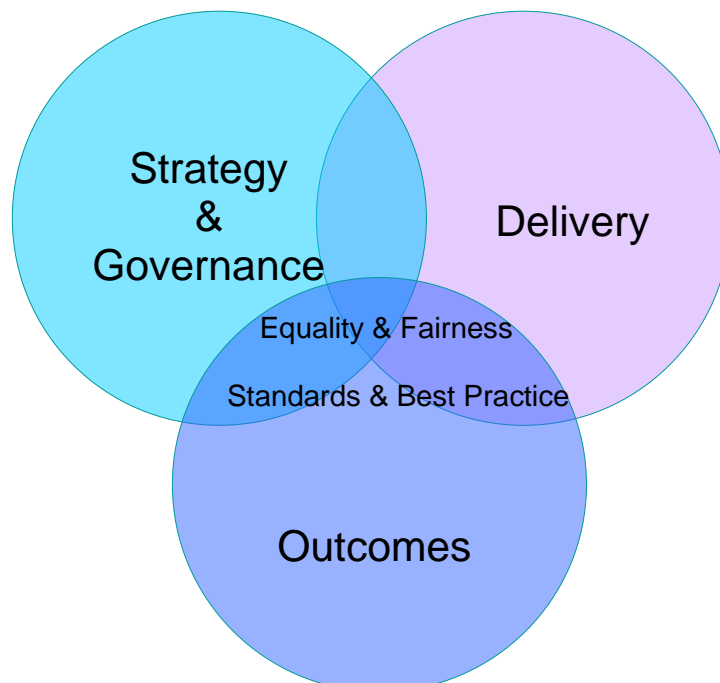
2. Previous measures

- 2.1 The aim of all CJI's activities is improvement. Its inspections examine organisations or inter-agency working for strengths and areas for improvement. It will make recommendations designed to help an organisation to improve in any aspect of its performance. In the past this has included recommendations designed to enhance the participation of disabled people in the criminal justice system.
- 2.2 We consider the accessibility and format of every method of consultation we use during inspections and in our programme development in order to remove barriers to the consultation process. Specific consideration has been given as to how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities) and minority ethnic communities.
- 2.3 We have been conscious of the fact that affected individuals and representative groups may have different needs. We have taken appropriate measures to ensure full participation in any meetings that are held. We consider, for example the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be conducted, the use of appropriate language and whether a signer and/or interpreter are necessary.
- 2.4 We make all relevant information available to consultees in appropriate formats to ensure meaningful consultation. This includes detailed information on the policy proposal being consulted upon and any relevant quantitative and qualitative data.
- 2.5 The CJI Equality Scheme (section 5) sets out our commitment to providing equality training, raising awareness, setting equality training objectives, and continued monitoring of the effectiveness of training.

Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people

- 2.6 To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. Where the exact request cannot be met we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.
- 2.7 The CJI website was redesigned to enable better access using recognised standards on accessibility ‘Guide to Good Practice in Commissioning Accessible Websites’. As a result we now provide access to the website in larger text format and also users have the option of downloading ‘Browsealoud’. This software converts text to speech and is a free download from our website. Publications are made available in other formats on request.
- 2.8 Whilst carrying out inspections at the core of our inspection framework are the principles of Equality and Fairness (Figure 1). We apply these principles during every inspection to promote positive attitudes to disabled people.

Figure 1: CJI Inspection Framework



Encouraging the participation of disabled people in public life

- 2.9 Our approach is based on our corporate vision of 'a better justice system for all'. This means all people having equal access to information and services.
- 2.10 Our office is accessible and is equipped with toilets for people with disabilities.
- 2.11 Our inspection recommendations have included those designed to encourage participation of disabled people in the criminal justice system. For example, the provision of better access for people called to jury service who have a range of disabilities.
- 2.12 Access to the CJI website is constantly monitored, including levels of access to software designed to promote access to people with sensory disabilities. Feedback and comment received from service users with regard to accessibility of information and services is collated and considered as part of our annual review of operations. An internal monthly report is produced which sets out how CJI's services are accessed.
- 2.13 CJI will make reasonable adjustments for any member of staff declaring a disability.
- 2.14 All CJI staff have undergone equality training to raise awareness of Section 75 and equality of opportunity. CJI staff are required to ensure that their training with regard to equality, diversity and disability issues is kept up to date.

3. Action measures

These measures in our Disability Action Plan will be taken between April 2014 and March 2017.

Measures to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.

Actions	Outcomes	Lead responsibility	Timetable
<u>Training:</u>			
Raise awareness of all staff so they fully understand their role in implementing the disability action plan	Staff will demonstrate knowledge of the disability action plan and their role in implementing it	Business manager/Equality officer	Delivered by 31 March 2015
Provide training to staff on the disability discrimination legislation	Staff will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Disability Discrimination Act and will apply it to their work	Business manager	Delivered by 31 March 2015
Provide staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure and encourage the participation of disabled people	Staff will actively encourage and effectively facilitate participation of disabled people in consultations and inspections	Business manager	Delivered by 31 March 2015
Prompt staff to keep up to date their personal equality monitoring records (via the CJI Quality Management System)	More accurate skills and training data in place	Equality Officer	Delivered by 31 March 2016
<u>Inspection work:</u>			
This will include examining the provisions made by the criminal justice system for people with disabilities	Inspections and follow-up reviews of previous inspections will monitor progress with disability related recommendations and areas for improvement	Deputy Chief Inspector & Lead Inspector	Delivered by 31 March 2017
Involve disabled people in delivery and review of this plan	Better engagement by people with a disability (adults and children where relevant)	Equality Officer	Delivered by March 2015
Involve disabled people in planning the programme of inspection	A programme of inspection tailored to better deliver the needs of disabled people as	Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice	Delivered by March 2016

	users of the criminal justice system		
<u>Access:</u>			
Ensure any building in use by CJI remains easily accessible to those people with disabilities	CJI is presently seeking to relocate. Any relocation will include ensuring that we fulfil our obligations of accessibility under the Disability Discrimination Act.	Chief Executive Officer & Business manager	Delivered by 31 March 2016
Ensure our recruitment and selection procedures are inclusive and actively encourage the participation of people with disabilities	Inclusion of welcoming statements in job advertisements and advertising in the Employers for Disability Bulletin Board (http://www.efdni.org/)	Chief Executive Officer & Business manager	Delivered by 31 March 2015

Chief Executive Officer

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