



Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2012-2013

Improving people's lives

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**EQUALITY COMMISSION
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

Annual Report and Accounts

for the year ended
31 March 2013

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly
under paragraphs 5(3) & 7(4) of
Schedule 8 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998
by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

on

18 July 2013



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Our Statement of Commitment

Vision

A society in Northern Ireland where there is:
Fairness and equality for all

Mission

To improve people's lives through
the responsible and effective use
of our powers.

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Castle Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3SR

Dear First Minister and Deputy First Minister

I have pleasure in submitting to you the Fourteenth annual report of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, covering the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. The report demonstrates both the breadth and depth of the Commission's responsibilities and the extent to which they have been successfully discharged.

On behalf of the Commission, I would like to express our appreciation of the assistance given to the Commission by officials of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

Yours sincerely



Michael Wardlow
Chief Commissioner

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Chief Commissioner's Foreword

I am pleased to have the opportunity to write this foreword for this annual report for a number of reasons.

This report marks my first full year as Chief Commissioner and it gives me an opportunity to offer some initial reflections. It allows me space to reflect on the role that I feel equality can play in helping to create a shared and better future. It also permits me to allow you, the reader, to get some sense of the Commission's vision for the future and how we are delivering on this.

It also presents an opportunity for me to challenge you to consider the view that equality can deliver for all sections of our society and that, by taking steps to move beyond compliance, we can enjoy the benefits which that more fair and equal society can bring.

Last year, we welcomed that our Executive has made a commitment in its Programme for Government to ensure that *"our policies and programmes will be designed in ways that ensure we can address inequality and unfairness and create conditions that support inclusion and equality of opportunity"*. Indeed, it has committed to having *"equality of opportunity and sustainability as our underpinning principles"*. We continue to work together with our colleagues and partners to help ensure that this aim can be delivered.

This year, as Chief Commissioner, I have seen clearly that despite the legislative provisions and our significant efforts to ensure compliance with the law, inequalities still exist.

I believe there are a number of reasons for this. First, there is an ongoing need to ensure that equality and good relations are mainstreamed effectively throughout public policy making and service delivery. Secondly, negative attitudes and prejudices are still commonplace in our society. This situation cannot continue if we are to demonstrate the values of a mature society which is attempting to move towards a shared and better future.

It is also clear that our legislative protections need to be updated and brought more closely into line with the changes that have occurred in Great Britain. We continue to promote the need for reform in key areas of the law and for greater harmony and clarity across all of the equality grounds.

The Section 75 duties are designed to put equality and good relations considerations at the heart of public policy decision-making and service delivery. We emphasised the importance of this during the development of the Welfare Reform Bill in Northern Ireland.

As a consequence, there has been some improved analysis and consideration of the potential adverse consequences of welfare reform on benefit claimants here, although there is still considerable work to be done by the Department for Social Development to improve its work to properly consider the equality implications of the Welfare Reform Bill and the associated Regulations and to identify and take mitigating measures where necessary.

The forthcoming year has more opportunities to further this aim. The Review of Public Administration is a generational opportunity to embed equality of opportunity and good relations in local government. We see the publication of Together Building a United Community and the suggested extension of the Commission's remit, as reinforcement of the concept that equality of opportunity and good relations are interdependent and inextricably linked.


During the year, I was challenged by some of the facts uncovered by 'Do You Mean Me?', the Commission's most recent research into attitudes and experiences of equality in Northern Ireland. The survey also showed that 1 in 3 of people claimed to have suffered some form of harassment or unfair treatment during the past three years because they belonged to a particular group, a figure up 17% since 2008. It also finds that there has been a hardening in negative attitudes, linked to levels of social contact towards people from different backgrounds including race, disability and sexual orientation over the last six years.

It is saddening that one in four respondents indicated that they would mind (a little or a lot) having a person with mental ill-health as a work colleague, a statistic which rose to a staggering 37% when that individual might be an in-law. Negative attitudes towards this group have increased more over time than attitudes towards any other group.

Perhaps as challenging is the fact that almost 30% of people agreed that there is sometimes a good reason to discriminate against certain groups.

On the more positive side the survey showed a high level of public awareness of equality in Northern Ireland and support for our legal framework and positive changes in attitudes in other areas, including those attracted to the same sex. 91% of respondents in 2011 agreed on the need for equality laws and more than three quarters of respondents (77%) agreed that equality laws should be strengthened.

It was also very pleasing to see the high levels of public confidence in the Commission and its work and that there was little difference between our two major community backgrounds in the levels of confidence reported.



In this business year, around 3,300 people came to us with concerns about discrimination. Nine out of ten found our services helpful in resolving their issues.

We remain concerned about levels of under-reporting and we are committed to addressing this with a range of outreach programmes working with advice networks across Northern Ireland, including local political constituency offices, trade unions, Citizens Advice Bureau and Advice NI. We have also sought to make direct contact at public events and locations, with over 13,000 people talking to us about their issues and concerns over the year.

We have also had a strong focus on employers, service providers and policy-makers, identifying and working together to address inequalities and promote good practice. This work ranges widely, from significant inputs to addressing equality concerns in major policy areas like welfare reform to working with hundreds of employers to improve equality provisions for their staff. A survey of employer satisfaction last year showed that 86% of employers were very satisfied with the service the Commission provided to them and that nearly 90% of employers said that the Commission provides a valued source of advice. 61% of organisations with a significant level of contact had introduced change as a result of their contact with the Commission.

I have been encouraged by the fact that our 22nd monitoring report published in December 2012 indicated that the composition of the Northern Ireland monitored workforce is now more balanced and representative than a decade ago, with 53.7% Protestant and 46.3% Catholic and over half the total now female (52.7%).

We are committed to actively encouraging good practice and to highlight the benefits equality delivers for society. In the following pages the concerted and co-ordinated work across the Commission to address this is detailed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our many partners in this work, from representative bodies to statutory agencies, who have helped us in our work to improve people's lives.

We have undertaken research over the last year to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all of our stakeholders. It is assuring to see that nearly nine in ten stakeholders (88%) sees the Commission as a source of expert advice, with seven out of ten (72%) agreeing that the Commission responds effectively to stakeholders, irrespective of background.

This is testament to the dedication and expertise of the staff and Commissioners who are fully committed to working collaboratively to deliver a better future for all. During this year I have been impressed by a number of things, including the dedication and vision of my fellow Commissioners, the professionalism and passion of the Commission's staff team, and the support for equality and confidence in the Commission and its work that can be found across the whole community in Northern Ireland.

I commend this Annual Report to you and in so doing, ask you to take up the challenge to work in partnership with the Commission to help us build a fair and more equal society.



Michael Wardlow
Chief Commissioner

The background is an abstract composition of warm, textured colors including shades of red, orange, and yellow, with some darker, almost black, areas. The texture appears to be that of a rough, possibly painted or stained surface. In the bottom right corner, there is a large, solid white circle that partially overlaps the colorful background.

Annual Report and Accounts 2012-2013

Director's Report

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland is an executive non departmental public body (NDPB) sponsored by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. The Commission, established on 1 October 1999 under the Northern Ireland Act 1998, assumed, along with the responsibilities for statutory equality duties and new disability matters, the duties and responsibilities of four former organisations:

- The Commission for Racial Equality for Northern Ireland;
- The Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland;
- The Fair Employment Commission for Northern Ireland; and
- The Northern Ireland Disability Council.

Since October 1999, additional duties and responsibilities with respect to age, disability, sexual orientation and special educational needs have also been assumed. During 2009, jointly with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Equality Commission was designated as the independent mechanism for Northern Ireland of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People (UNCRPD) with the role of promoting, protecting and monitoring the implementation of the Convention.

Since the Commission's inception, it has aimed to fulfil these duties by working in partnership with key stakeholders to place equality at the heart of civic, economic and political life in Northern Ireland.

The main pieces of legislation from which the Commission derives its duties and powers are:

- Equal Pay Act (NI) 1970, as amended
- Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976, as amended
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended
- Race Relations (NI) Order 1997, as amended
- Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, as amended
- Northern Ireland Act 1998
- Equality (Disability, etc.) (NI) Order 2000
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003, as amended
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005, as amended
- Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006, as amended
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006, as amended

The Equality Commission's Annual Report and Accounts are prepared in accordance with Schedule 8 of the Northern Act 1998 and in a form directed by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister with the approval of the Department of Finance and Personnel.

The Commission is led by a Chief Commissioner, supported by a Deputy Chief Commissioner. The overall number of Commissioners should be not less than 14 and not more than 20.

Including the Chief Commissioner and Deputy Chief Commissioner there are currently 16 Commissioners.

The Commission's Chief Executive has been designated as the Accounting Officer.

Commission and Chief Commissioner

The following served as members of the Commission during the reporting period. The table also includes information on the number of Commission meetings which took place during the financial year and the number attended by each Commissioner.

Commissioner		No. of meetings	No. attended
Michael Wardlow	Chief Commissioner	10	10
Jane Morrice	Deputy Chief Commissioner	10	9
Stella Burnside		10	6
Fidelma Carolan		10	9
Anna Carragher		10	6
Kit Chivers		10	10
Patricia Feeney		10	9
Milton Kerr		10	10
Charo Lanao-Madden		10	6
Lyn McBriar		10	9
Stephen McIlveen		10	7
Liam Maskey		10	7
Dermot Nesbitt		10	9
Peter Sheridan		10	9
Norman Trotter		10	9
Murray Watt		10	10

Management executive

Evelyn Collins	Chief Executive
Keith Brown	Head of Corporate Services
Eileen Lavery	Head of Advice and Compliance
Vacant	Head of Legal, Policy and Research

Commissioners' Interests

An up to date register of Commissioners' interests is maintained by the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer and is available for inspection at the Commission's offices in Equality House, 7-9 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast BT2 7DP.

Chief Executive's Management Commentary

Performance against Targets

This was the first year of the Commission's Corporate Plan for 2012 -15, 'Improving People's Lives'. In line with the new Corporate Plan, in this year's Business Plan, progress was measured in four strategic areas.

- Addressing key inequalities
- Extending equality practices in workplaces and in the provision of goods, facilities and services
- Challenging discrimination
- Delivering effective and efficient services

In this year's Business Plan, across each of these areas a small number of high level objectives were developed. In total 19 objectives were included in the Business Plan 2012/13.

Of the 19 objectives set, by the end of the year, 15 (79%), were fully met, 2 (11%) were partly met and 2 (11%) were unmet.

Further detail of the delivery in each of the Key Output areas is included below, in the section on Progress against Key Performance Indicators.

Results for the Year

The results for the Commission for the period are set out in detail in our Financial Statements at page 61. The Accounting Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 3 July 2013.

The Financial Reporting Manual (FRM) requires the Commission to treat grant-in-aid as financing rather than income. £6,200,000 (2011/12, £6,525,000) was received from OFMDFM in the year. Comprehensive expenditure for the year was £6,339,275 (2011/12, £6,510,413).

There has been an increase in the Taxpayers' Equity deficit of £131,656 from £117,650 at 31 March 2012 to £249,306 at 31 March 2013.

The main reason for this was the easement of £250,000, at the request of the Department, which was being held against a provision for early severance costs.

The Equality Commission operates as a going concern. It is financed by funding from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. Funding for 2013/14 has been approved.

Business Review

The upward pressure of staff costs remains the main challenge which the Commission faces and it continues to address this. The reduction in full time equivalent (fte) posts reported in recent years continues, albeit at a slower rate. This year saw a further reduction in the fte headcount of one post, from 117 to 116 posts and an increase, compared with last year, of £86,610 in net staffing costs. The increase was a consequence of the implementation of the Northern Ireland Civil Services pay entitlement. A business case for facilitating a number of requests for flexible early severance and flexible early retirement was prepared during 2012/13 and approval from OFMDFM was awaited at the year end. A provision of £250,000 has also been made in respect of potential exit packages necessary in the coming year.

Likely Future Developments

The publication in May 2013 of the Together Building a United Community initiative seems likely to lead to change to the Commission's statutory remit, although the timeframe for the changes is not yet clear. It is anticipated that additional resources will be made available to facilitate such an extension of the remit.

The potential for further sharing of common and core services will continue to be explored, with the objective of generating efficiencies while maintaining cost effective service delivery and minimising impact on staff and cost to the public purse.

Important Events Occurring After the Year End

There have been no significant events since the year-end which would affect this report and the accounts.

Research and Development

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland does not engage in any research and development activities as defined by IFRS.

Charitable Donations

The Commission made no charitable donations during the period.

Pension Liabilities

Staff Pension Liabilities are borne by the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) – see notes 1 and 3 to the Accounts, and the Commission's Remuneration Report, which follows later in this Annual Report.

Payment to Suppliers

The Commission is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with the Government's Better Payment Practice Code. Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later.

During the period 97.3% of bills were paid within the thirty day standard, 71.7% of the total bills received were paid within 10 days. The comparative figures for 2010/11 were 96.5% and 58.6%.

Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Statement

The Commission continues to promote sustainable development through its operational activities and policy responsibilities. It is committed to the regular review of sustainable development practices and activities.

The Commission has in place a Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Policy. To champion sustainability within the Commission a staff led 'Green Team' has been established. During this year the policy was reviewed and a new policy put in place. The foci of the policy remains the three key areas of:

- Environment
- Community
- Workplace

OFMDFM continues to lead on strategic policy for sustainable development and the Commission continues to take forward work designed to promote, encourage and support this.

Environment

The Commission seeks to identify opportunities to minimise any negative impact and promote a positive influence on the environment. To do so the Commission continues to work closely with its facilities management partner to minimise our impact on the environment.

Key objectives of our sustainability strategy are:

- waste minimisation;
- reduction in energy consumption; and
- promoting awareness of environmental issues among Commission staff.

The organisation monitors progress on delivery of its sustainability targets.

Although this year saw a reduction in the waste generated by the Commission from 30,851 kilos in 2011/12 to 24,027 this year, the percentage of waste recycled fell from 71.8% to 61.4%. Last year's figure was distorted by the preparations for the relocation of staff; compared with 2010/11 although the amount of waste has increased, the percentage recycled also increased.

The Commission's recycling figures for recent years are summarised in the table below.

Year	Total Waste (kilos)	Total Recycled (kilos)	%
2012/13	24,027	14,747	61.4
2011/12	30,851	22,151	71.8
2010/11	17,922	9,697	54.1
2009/10	24,480	17,806	72.7

The Commission's Energy Certificate, DEC grade C (59) was retained. The Commission has been advised that this level is very positive rating for a building of this size and nature.

During 2012/13, in conjunction with its staff led 'Green Team', the Commission undertook a number of further energy saving initiatives, including: increased monitoring and regulation of seasonal temperature settings on heating controls and the extension of motion sensors into the basement car park.

During 2013/14 the Green team will continue to work with the Commission's facilities management company to further review waste disposal and energy consumption figures and take appropriate action.

Social and Community

The Commission continued to provide the use of its facilities to enable staff to undertake staff on an individual basis to undertake voluntary fund raising initiatives.

Once again, this year staff in Equality House contributed to the BBC coordinated Salvation Army / St Vincent de Paul Family Appeal at Christmas.

Workplace

The Commission is committed to providing a healthy and safe working environment. During this year, the evacuation procedure was tested and designated staff received training in the use of evacuation chairs. A number of workstation assessments were also completed. The annual Health and Safety Audit was undertaken and the Health and Safety Policy and associated procedures were, once again, reviewed and updated.

People development is formally progressed through the operation of the Commission's appraisal and learning and development policies and staff have access to a range of training and development opportunities and personal development plans. Staff also have access to a wide range of flexible working arrangements in line with NICS policies and procedures.

Equality of Opportunity

The Commission is committed to the provision of equality of opportunity and fair participation to all persons regardless of sex, marital status, religious belief, political affiliation/opinion, age, family status, ethnic or racial background, sexual orientation, disability, nationality or trade union membership.

Our Corporate Plan for the period 2012-15 identifies how the Commission can best contribute to the protection and promotion of equality and good relations in NI. As an employer we recognise that ensuring equality in employment and eliminating workplace discrimination and harassment are essential for developing a diverse workforce, attracting high calibre employees and maximising productivity.

In line with this commitment the Commission has developed an Employment Equality Plan in accordance with the requirements of each of the equality and anti-discrimination laws in Northern Ireland and with the good practice recommendations of the Equality Codes of Practice.

The Commission has continued to comply with its statutory monitoring and review duties as required under the Fair Employment and Treatment Order 1998 (FETO). Employee equality monitoring was conducted in 2012/13 across all the equality grounds. Analysis and benchmarking of this data has contributed to the development of the Employment Equality Plan which includes the Commission's affirmative action programme.

During this year the Commission completed an exercise monitoring the composition of its staff across each of the main equality grounds. Further information on the Commission's workforce composition and other equality developments during this year can be found at Appendix 2.


Employee Involvement

The Commission encourages widespread consultation and exchange of information at all levels within the Commission.

This is implemented through staff briefings and the involvement of staff representatives on a Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee. Staff are involved in key working groups dealing with business improvement and accreditation projects, equal opportunities, health and safety and corporate responsibility.

Data Protection and Freedom of Information

The Commission is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and has in place policies, guidelines and arrangements for compliance with the Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation. Regular reviews are undertaken of ICT and data security and steps taken to guard against data loss. During 2012/13 an Information Security Audit was conducted by the Commission's internal auditors, which resulted in a 'substantial assurance' rating.



In addition, during this year all staff were provided with refresher training on data protection and freedom of information, with a particular emphasis on data protection, given by the Information Commissioner's Office.

There were no incidents of data loss or any information breach during the year.

During the year there were 36 Freedom of Information requests and 14 data protection requests all of which were responded to within the statutory time limits. On two occasions an extension of time was agreed with the requestor.

Managing Attendance and Sickness absence

The Commission's arrangements for the payment of Statutory Sick Pay and the monitoring and management of attendance are based on those in operation in the NICS. The Commission has a Managing Attendance Policy and provides training to Managers and other staff on its operation.

The level of employee sick absence in 2012/13 was 3.69%, a slight increase from last year's 3.34%. The comparable NICS figure is 4.6% (2011/12). The NICS absence target is 10.0 average days lost per staff year. The Commission's number of average days lost in 2012/13 was 10.8 days, an increase on last year's 9.9 days. The Commission is currently reviewing its Managing Sickness Absence procedures.

Complaints Procedure

The Commission received one complaint from a member of the public under its Complaints Procedure. The complaint was not upheld and as set out in the Procedure, the complainant was advised of his right to ask the NI Ombudsman to consider the matter. A complaint to the Ombudsman was not pursued.

Statement of Disclosure of Information to Auditors

So far as the Accounting Officer in office at the date of approval of these financial statements is aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the Commission's auditors are unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Accounting Officer in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Commission's auditors are aware of that information.


Commission Offices

Equality House
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BT2 7DP

Auditor

Comptroller and Auditor General
Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
Belfast
BT7 1EU

Signed by:



Evelyn Collins CBE

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer
3 July 2013

Progress against agreed Key Performance Indicators

During this year the Commission received formal approval from the Ministers in its Sponsor Department, OFMDFM, for its new Corporate Plan covering the period 2012-15. Following approval, the Commission published the Plan.

The Plan, entitled Improving People's Lives, has a central aim of impacting on the lives of every person in Northern Ireland. The Plan sets out the strategic framework within which we will carry out our powers and duties over the next three years. Four strategic priorities to make a difference were developed:

- i. addressing key inequalities;
- ii. extending equality practices in the workplace and goods, facilities and services;
- iii. challenging discrimination;
- iv. delivering effective and efficient services.

The new Corporate Plan will be used to develop annual business plans over its lifetime. This year, across the four strategic areas, nineteen objectives were set. By the end of the year, 15 (79%) were fully met, 2 (11%) were partly met and 2 (11%) were unmet.

Further detail of the delivery in each of the Key Output areas is included below, in the section on Progress against Key Performance Indicators.

1. Addressing Key Inequalities

The Commission will continue to highlight key inequalities and gaps in legislation, policy and practice and encourage Government and public authorities to take appropriate action to address inequalities, including through the effective application of their equality and good relations duties.

It is also clear that there are many factors, in particular the economic context, welfare reform and public sector reform which will have a substantial impact on people's lives in the coming period. We will work to ensure that equality considerations are properly taken into account in policies to deal with these matters.

A robust legislative framework is required also; while we welcome the Programme for Government commitment to bring forward legislation to protect people from age discrimination in respect of the provision of goods, facilities and services, we believe that legislative reform is required in other areas such as race and disability. Indeed, there is a need for harmonisation across all equality statutes.


The objectives set out in the Corporate Plan reflect both ongoing work priorities and areas where we will focus attention over the three year period, seeking to influence policy makers in their planning and delivery of public policy. We will utilise opportunities, such as the Programme for Government and the Executive's equality strategies, to promote our policy positions and encourage Government and public authorities to take the appropriate action to address key inequalities and improve equality of opportunity and good relations in Northern Ireland. We will increase our engagement with decision-makers, including elected representatives and public bodies, to achieve positive outcomes.

Below is set out progress against objectives during 2012/13.

Influencing policy making

- updating the Commission's statements on key inequalities using latest data sources including Census 2011;
- delivering a research programme examining inequalities in education, employment and childcare;
- completing surveys looking at public awareness of equality in Northern Ireland and satisfaction amongst employers, other stakeholders and the public of the Commission's performance in delivering equality;
- producing the annual Fair Employment Monitoring Report.

Progress on updating the Commission's Key Inequalities publication, first produced in 2007, is dependent to a large extent on the publication of detailed results from the 2011 Census of Population. Based on what has already been published, some of the Commission's data has been updated. Further progress will be made in 2013/14.



Research examining the role of childcare in maximising the economic participation of carers and women was completed and launched during the year and further presented at Commission's 'Getting a Fair Share' conference in March 2013. A research project on Key Inequalities in Employment is nearing completion and will be published soon.

The annual Fair Employment Monitoring Report was published in December 2012.

Three major surveys were completed in 2012/13.

- Do You Mean Me? Discrimination: attitudes and experience in Northern Ireland.
- Satisfaction of Employers and Service Providers With Business Support Provided by the Equality Commission.
- Survey of Equality Commission Stakeholders

In June 2012, our 'Do You Mean Me?' survey of public attitudes to and experiences of equality in Northern Ireland was launched. The survey was widely covered in the traditional and online media. The findings were also widely disseminated through stakeholder networks, particularly the community, voluntary, political and academic sectors.

The survey recorded that attitudes towards minority groups, were for the most part positive, and awareness and support for Northern Ireland's equality framework remains high.

However, it also records that negative attitudes towards some groups; Travellers, transgender persons, Eastern European migrant workers, those experiencing mental ill-health were higher and/or increasing. The survey also highlighted the negative impact of the economic downturn.

The survey also recorded high public confidence in the Commission, with no difference by community background in the confidence expressed.

The launch event at the new Titanic signature project reached around 400 individuals, around half of whom watched online. Follow-up briefings were provided to MLAs and the OFMDFM Committee. At the year- end educational resources based on the survey were in development.

A survey of employers and service providers was completed in May 2012, examining awareness and satisfaction with our services. As with previous surveys, satisfaction was very high. We will make use of specific survey findings to inform our ongoing work.

A more general stakeholder satisfaction survey was completed and the final report was presented at the March 2013 Commission meeting. Again, this survey reported high levels of satisfaction with the Commission and its work.

The survey will form a key input to the development of a revised Stakeholder Communications Strategy, which is in preparation.

Shaping key strategies

- helping shape equality strategies;
- highlighting equality considerations in key policy areas;
- embedding equality in the work of Government.

During this year work with key stakeholders was undertaken to update, refine and engage on policy positions relevant to the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government commitments to progress disability, gender, race and sexual orientation strategies.

Related engagement with OFMDFM and relevant government Departments sought to shape equality strategies. A particular focus of attention was the OFMDFM consultation on a disability strategy.

As part of its work on good relations, the Commission responded to consultations on shared education and shared housing in 2012/13.

The Commission also sought to inform the work of Government by providing evidence to Assembly Committees - including on welfare reform, the Superannuation Bill, the Special Advisors Bill, gender neutral insurance, Equal Pay Code of Practice and the Commission's Equality Awareness Survey. The Commission also made a submission and met with the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education.

In May 2012 the Commission met with the Education Minister and at various events, with other stakeholders to set out its views on reform of Special Educational Needs.

The Commission also set out its views through a range of consultation responses - including on various aspects of welfare reform, health & social care, housing strategy, Traveller children education and employment law reform.

Work on embedding equality in the work of government included disseminating our position on a Code of Conduct for Councillors; engagement on community planning with key stakeholders and setting out our views on issues such as the Superannuation Bill and the Reform of Local Government. We also engaged with public authorities to set out our views on priorities that might be included in their audits of inequalities and/or action plans.

Building support for legislative reform

- influencing the content of forthcoming age – goods, facilities and services legislation;
- building support for legislative reform on disability and race.

The Commission's proposals for legislative reform, particularly in relation to extending coverage in relation to age and goods, facilities and services were published in April 2012 and widely disseminated. A series of case studies in relation to age and access to goods, facilities and services were in preparation at the year end.

A key focus this year was the position of children and young people and significant work was undertaken with key stakeholders including engagement with OFMDFM and its Advisory Group and, jointly with the Northern Ireland Commissioner on Children and Young People (NICCY), a round table with representatives from the children's sector. This engagement has helped to raise awareness of the need for children and young people to have protection against age discrimination and to build support for the Commission's policy positions.

A seminar on Age and Health and Social Services was held in September 2012, involving the OFMDFM Junior Ministers and more than 100 other participants. A short film showing the experiences of young people in relation to accessing health and social care services was developed for the Commission's website and partner websites.

During the year there was engagement with the race sector on proposals for law reform and by the year end the Commission's position paper on race law reform was being updated.

Another focus for work was disability law reform. In addition to the appearance before the OFMDFM Committee in November 2012, a seminar involving the Junior Ministers and other participants was held in June 2012.

Other work included the procurement and dissemination of an expert legal opinion on the impact of the 'Malcolm' decision, a disability stakeholder round table and a series of meetings with key disability organisations and trade union representatives. 82% of respondents to the OFMDFM's consultation on the new disability strategy considered there to be value in additional legislation to support the strategy. We continue to liaise with OFMDFM and the Equality & Human Rights Steering Group (Delivering Social Change Framework) to progress and secure this area of law reform.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

- influencing the implementation of UNCRPD;
- building awareness of the process;
- updating evidence in support of 'parallel' reporting and
- producing a draft 'parallel' report.

The Equality Commission and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission are jointly designated as the "Independent Mechanism" in Northern Ireland to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). This briefing is based on our joint submission to the consultation on the above strategy.

The case for disability law reform and the importance of UNCRPD have been highlighted throughout all of our disability related policy work this year. We have prioritised engagement with Government, disabled stakeholders, representative groups - including with roundtable events in Belfast (12 June) and Londonderry (14 June) and through a seminar on the urgent need for the reform of disability legislation (28 June).

A key area of work was the response to OFMDFM Disability Strategy with reference to UNCRPD and engagement with stakeholders in this regard. We have also sought to raise awareness of UNCRPD through a number of consultation responses; including, the Department of Education's Special Educational Needs Review, Department of Social Development's Personal Independence Payment Regulations and the Health and Social Care Board's Transforming Your Care.

We have completed draft evaluations against a number of UNCRPD articles associated with economic, social and cultural rights and are currently giving consideration as to how best to share our views with stakeholders. The development of parallel report recommendations for the UN Committee has been deferred due to delay in UNCRPD consideration of the State Party Report. A new timeline based on an amended Committee review timetable will be prepared.

Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

- developing 'priority issues' for consideration by CEDAW Committee;
- communicating these to Government and other stakeholders; and
- preparing the Commission's submission to CEDAW.

A list of priority issues was forwarded to the CEDAW Committee in Geneva during the year and disseminated through the Commission's website. A range of events, including a conference on 'Getting a Fair Share?' highlighted the issues which will form the basis of our CEDAW response.

A final report for the CEDAW Committee has been prepared, which will be forwarded to it and relevant stakeholders in advance of the Committee's examination of the United Kingdom Government to take place in summer 2013.

Increasing engagement and participation

- developing partnership projects on race and sexual orientation issues;
- relaunching the 'Reaching Out' programme;
- revising the Commission's Stakeholder Communications Strategy;

In addition to the engagement work reported on above, during this year the Commission made a conscious effort to refocus its communications with the lesbian, gay and bisexual communities on online platforms.

The final quarter of the year saw the first fruits of this with the launch of the SoMe [Sexual Orientation; More Equality] online project. In its first month of operation the micro-site had in excess of 5,000 visitors and the YouTube channel had approximately 33,000 viewers.

The Commission initiated a prolonged engagement process with the race sector. Highlights of this included large-scale events in Lisburn and Londonderry. This work has greatly assisted the production of the Commission's communications strategy which seeks to address the complexities of audience needs. Work has begun on creating a range of communication resources, which will have a strong online focus.

The Commission's 'Reaching Out' programme was revised through the year and the work has been rebranded under the 'Treated Unfairly?' banner.

The initiative has two strands: one which seeks to better connect with individuals who may have experienced discrimination and encourage them to use our services and one which has a focus on supporting the broad range of advice networks in their work helping individuals.

These networks include constituency offices of all political parties, charitable groups and advocacy networks. Highlights of the work included a seminar in Equality House in March 2013, the delivery of advice sessions to members of the Advice NI network and constituency teams across Northern Ireland and attendance at community events where Commission staff were able to engage with more than 13,000 people.

The survey of stakeholder groups that was undertaken during this business year, found that 86% of survey participants had confidence in the Commission, with similarly high ratings of its advice services and its leadership in equality.

These findings reflect a significant focus on building stakeholder relationships and partnerships over the past and current Corporate Plan periods. In this business year, a total of eight roundtables were held, greatly assisting our work to promote equality in disability, age, gender and sexual orientation.

Six major events on equality themes were held through the year. In addition, insights have been developed with stakeholder participation to inform our communications work across all the grounds.

The year has also seen an increase in the uptake of our stakeholder communication services. Subscribers to our e-zine (electronic newsletter) have increased by 35%, and now stands at 1,500 users. Similarly, our followers of the Commission's Twitter account have risen to 1,300, with around one-third joining in the last three months of the business year.

Building the Commission's profile

- maintaining the Commission's media profile;
- relaunching the website.

The Commission's work has continued to be profiled strongly across all media – broadcast, print and online - through this year. Around four in ten stories published relevant to us were proactively placed.

It was a year with significant and ground-breaking stories including the publication of the 'Do You Mean Me?' study; the outcome of a number of key legal cases by the Commission, including Lennon v Department of Regional Development, McCaul v Smyth's Toys and Cassidy & Quinn v Topaz Energy; and Council decisions on flags and emblems. Media ratings continued to be high at 80.5%.

The Commission has invested in meeting the needs of its many customers who wish to access equality services online. During this business year considerable work has been achieved in developing the customer journey pathways. This has been based on feedback and insights from stakeholder groups and individuals and also an analysis of the SoMe online project, which was launched in pilot form in February 2013. It is envisaged that the new site will have a range of interactive elements and be available across all main platforms. It is now scheduled to be operational in Autumn 2013.

2. Extending equality practices in workplaces and in the provision of goods, facilities and services

Over the three years of the new Corporate Plan, the Commission has committed itself to encouraging and assisting improvements in business, in public authorities and in other organisations through high quality, tailored, advice and direction based on their legal obligations and on good practices, including equality issues that arise in the current economic context.

The Commission will provide a responsive, expert advice and training service to employers and service providers across the full range of equality grounds. This will include further development of our web-based services.

The Commission will work with service providers to promote access to goods, facilities and services, with a particular focus on the grounds of disability. It will also continue to work with partners to encourage opportunities for employment for those who are most marginalised, which we consider is particularly important in times of economic recession, and with partners to identify and highlight good practice where better outcomes have been delivered for disadvantaged groups.

We continue to deliver our regulatory responsibilities. Ensuring high levels of compliance with the employer duties arising from the Fair Employment and Treatment Order 1998 (FETO) and with the equality and good relations duties on public authorities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Disability Discrimination Order 2006 remains a key objective.

Over the period of the Plan, we will also review the delivery of our regulatory duties to ensure they reflect the principles of good practice. In particular, we will review our approach to the use of our investigation powers, seeking to increase their role as part of our work to promote equality of opportunity and to address inequalities.

Outlined below is a summary of progress in delivering the Commission's objectives in 2012/13.

Working with others

- promoting improved equality practices;
- monitoring affirmative action agreements and employability initiatives;
- improving access to goods, facilities and services.

The goal of our work with employers and service providers continues to be improvements in equality practices. Improvements to practices are achieved through following up on settlements agreed during the course of legal cases, interventions in Article 55 reviews and Section 75 processes, as well as through our advice and training actions.

Although it is difficult to get a true measure of the changes which are achieved on an annual basis, in the 2012 employer and service provider survey undertaken by the Commission, 33% of all organisations stated that they had instituted a change to equality/employment practices and/or procedures as a direct result of their contact with the Commission. For those with a significant level of contact (i.e. three or more contacts in the previous 12 months), this figure increased to 61%.

During this year 91 policies were developed with 57 employers, in areas such as recruitment and selection, harassment, disability and age.

The Commission undertakes its settlement follow up work in a largely no-fault environment and the objective is the improvement of the policies, procedures or practice, which may have given rise to the original complaint. During 2012/13, staff worked with 28 post settlement employers. Of these, eight were carried over from the previous year and 20 were received in this year.

During the year the Commission monitored progress on twenty affirmative action agreements. This monitoring showed evidence of improvements in applicant flows in the majority of these employers, although there has been limited recruitment in recent years.

There were also some improvements in the composition in the majority of employers. The Commission will continue to engage with employers to promote good practice in affirmative action, especially where there is little evidence of improving trends.

The Commission also progressed work to establish a baseline of current access to goods and services for disabled people which will form the basis of the Commission's work in this area over the remainder of the Corporate Plan. By the year end, work was well underway and is scheduled for completion early in the new financial year.

Employability Initiatives

This year, the Commission's activity focussed on monitoring ten of the employability initiatives that are in place. This monitoring indicated progress made by a number of public and private sector organisations in terms of the provision of training and employment opportunities to marginalised groups, in particular those with a disability and young unemployed people. Information on these outcomes of employability initiatives will be disseminated, with the aim of encouraging good practice among other employers.

During the year the Commission's Employability Toolkit was updated and a new version placed on its website. A further good practice publication is in development and was near to completion at the year end.

Advisory service

- providing an effective advisory service;
- extending the Commission's reach.

The Commission continues to provide information and advisory support across the full range of the Commission's remit, including an advice line, training support, information materials and guidance.

The Commission's 2012 survey of employers and service providers showed that employer satisfaction with the services provided by the Commission was maintained at 86%. The proportion of employers who were 'very satisfied' with Commission services increased from 28% in 2007 to 51% in 2012. The level of satisfaction was consistent across public and private sector organisations of different sizes.

This year an action plan based on the feedback received from the survey was developed, communicated in an employer ezine and is being implemented.

The Commission's Advice and Compliance Division dealt with 3,025 general enquiries over the year. A further 16,433 enquiries dealt with related to employers' compliance work, an increase of 8% from last year's figure (15,217). A total of 158 employer training sessions were organised, attended by 1,372 individuals from 589 employers. There were a further four employer events held with over 150 employers attending.

Other Engagement and Partnership Working

The Commission aims to extend its reach in employer work, both in terms of the employers it reaches out to, particularly small businesses, and by working in partnership with others.

During 2012/13 the Commission delivered six training seminars specifically focussed on the needs of small businesses. These seminars were attended by 102 representatives from small businesses. Template policies and factsheets were also developed for the small business sector.

To improve engagement and partnership building with key stakeholders and relevant gatekeepers by developing and maintaining effective networks to promote mutually agreed equality objectives. This year the Commission continued its partnership with the Labour Relations Agency and two joint publications, both employment equality law updates, were produced.

The Commission also worked closely with the Local Government Staff Commission on its Local Government Equality and Diversity initiative, which was working towards the launch of an Equality and Diversity Framework in May 2013. The Framework is

designed to assist councils to meet their equality and diversity obligations, both the anti-discrimination legislation and the statutory equality duties, and to demonstrate their compliance with them.

Other partnership work in this area included engaging with small businesses, the Health and Safety Agency, the Local Government Development Officers and with Department for Employment and Learning employment advisors. This work included holding six events targeted at the small business sector, which were attended by over 100 small businesses.

Codes of Practice

Much of the Commission's advisory and training work is structured around the Codes of Practice for which it is responsible and the other guidance material it produces.

Near the year end the Commission was advised that its revised Equal Pay Code was being given approval by OFMDFM as required by statute. It is anticipated that formal confirmation will be provided early in 2013/14 and plans for the new Code's publication and promotion are underway.

Compliance and Enforcement

This compliance relates to the statutory duties which registered concerns and public authorities have to fulfil under the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (FETO), the Northern Ireland Act (NIA) and the Disability Discrimination Order (DDO).

Maintaining compliance with FETO

FETO compliance levels remains high and above the 95% target. Of the 3,696 Monitoring Returns received this year from employers, by the year end 3,648 had been authorised by staff, with more than 99% in compliance.

Commission staff audited and reported on 162 employer Article 55 Reviews received over the first year of the Corporate Plan 2012/15. This audit showed a consistently high level of employer compliance (95.1%). The audit also showed that the Article 55 Review process continues to have an impact in terms of planned improvement to employment equality practices, with, 90, over half of those employers surveyed, planning improvements to equality practices mainly in the areas of developing and/or reviewing recruitment, selection and promotion policies and procedures and the delivery of training associated with these.

Section 75

Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 places a number of duties on the Commission with respect to enforcement of Section 75:

- to keep under review the effectiveness of the legislation;
- to offer advice to public authorities and others in connection with Section 75;
- to approve equality schemes and request any public authority to make a revised scheme;
- to consider complaints received regarding Section 75, and to investigate where appropriate.

The Commission took a number of steps in furtherance of these duties during the year under review.

To improve the effectiveness of the public authorities' compliance with their Section 75 responsibilities, since May 2011 the Commission has requested the submission of new or revised Equality Schemes from them on a rolling basis. The process was briefly summarized in last year's report and the final requests for new and revised equality schemes were issued to public authorities in August 2012. A total of 196 public authorities have been required to submit a new or revised Scheme.

At the end of March 2013, 154 schemes had been submitted and by the year end 132 have been considered and approved. During this year, 62 schemes were approved and our target of processing at least 85% of submitted schemes for consideration is being met. To date no reports to the Secretary of State have been necessary.

Commission staff continued to provide advice to public authorities and others in relation to Section 75 and equality schemes. This advice has continued to focus on the development of revised equality schemes and support to those who are preparing them. A wide range of authorities have continued to seek advice on the application of their equality scheme commitments to their business, particularly to enable them to pay due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations when developing, reviewing and informing decisions on their policies.

Section 75 Complaints and Investigations

Our target remains to complete all Section 75 paragraph 10 and 11 processes within three months of commencement.

During 2012/13 a total of 80 individuals contacted the Commission with queries regarding the obligations of public authorities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. They were all given advice on the process for making a complaint where they believed that a public authority may have failed to comply with its Section 75 duties.

Eight written complaints were initiated by individuals under Paragraph 10 of Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act. Of these, one complaint was authorised for investigation and that investigation is underway; two were withdrawn; three were not authorised for investigation and a further two cases were still under consideration at the year end.

In addition, the Commission authorized one investigation of its own volition (under Paragraph 11) and this is currently underway. This investigation relates to the naming of a play park by Newry and Mourne District Council.

The Commission also considered a Paragraph 11 investigation of the Department of Social Development's Welfare Reform Bill, At the year end no decision in relation to the proposed investigation, had been taken.

All paragraph 10 and 11 processes to consider complaints were completed within three months of commencement.

Disability Action Plans

Our objective this year was to facilitate public authorities to comply with their duties under the Disability Discrimination Order. A project to collate all of the plans received by the Commission and to use the information contained to provide further guidance is underway.

Other investigatory powers

- reviewing the use of the Commission's investigation powers;
- effecting changes to policies, practices and service delivery through the use of investigations.

The target of reviewing the Commission's strategic approach to the use of its investigation powers was not met this year and the project will be moved into the 2013/14 Business Plan.

Progress was made on reviewing the impact of the formal investigation into the Accessibility of Health Information in Northern Ireland for People with Learning Disabilities and it is planned that a report will be available early in the new financial year.

No new formal investigations were initiated during this year.

3. Challenging discrimination

Our advisory work to address inequalities and to improve equality practices has and will improve the experiences of many, but it is also clear that there is a continuing need for the Commission to enforce the obligations contained in equality law. Over the period of the Corporate Plan, the Commission will continue to commit significant resource and effort to challenging and eradicating discrimination and continue to use our legal assistance powers strategically to effect positive change.

We will continue to invest in the provision of a high quality, expert legal advice service to individuals and to provide assistance to individuals, in line with our legal assistance strategy, to achieve a legal resolution to their cases. We will give more prominence to under-utilised areas of law and more recent extensions to our remit in partnership with other stakeholders.

Working in partnership with other advice-giving bodies on rights and responsibilities, the Commission will increase the reach of our services and continue to highlight issues of discrimination in public platforms, including media outlets, and raise awareness of the Commission's role.

Outlined below is the progress made in 2012/13.

Advice to potential complainants

- responding to at least 3,000 legal enquiries;
- maintaining satisfaction levels at 80%.

During the year the Commission provided advice to 3,300 people who believed they may have been the victim of discriminatory treatment. This is up 100 from the previous year. Of those enquiries within the Commission's remit 38% were in relation to disability (including the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order, (SENDO); 27% related to gender; 12% to religion/politics; 12% to race; 9% to age; and 2% related to sexual orientation.

An independent customer satisfaction survey was commissioned and carried out by IPSOS MORI in 2012/13. The focus of the survey was on satisfaction with the Commission's initial discrimination advice services. The results were very positive. 79% of respondents said it was easy to find out about the service. 85% respondents were satisfied with contact process. 87% of respondents found the Discrimination Advice Officer helpful. 82% of respondents found the website and discrimination complaints pack useful. There was an overall satisfaction rating of 81%.

Compared to the previous survey in 2007, the internet is now much more widely used by enquirers. While there are positive views about all information provided, the website is perceived as the most useful, informative and helpful in terms of contextualising problems.

Respondents were given the opportunity to make suggestions for the service. An action plan, based on survey results will be compiled and implemented in the coming business year.

Assisting complainants

- progressing cases in line with the Legal Assistance Strategy;
- obtaining effective outcomes in 75% of cases;
- concluding 90% of cases within 12 months of approving assistance.

A small number (8%) of those who sought advice did not resolve their problems informally and sought assistance to pursue a legal case. During the course of the year, 264 applications were considered by a Legal Funding Committee and 83 (31.4%) were granted assistance, under the terms of the Commission's Policy on the Provision of Legal Advice and Assistance.

During 2012/13, cases brought by 75 individuals were concluded. In 65 of these, a satisfactory outcome was achieved (87%). Successful outcomes include appropriate compensation and agreements reached with respondents to undertake revisions to practices and procedures, which may have a wider positive impact than simply the particular circumstances of the complaint being settled.

During 2012/13, eight decisions (involving 13 claimants) were issued in cases supported by the Commission.


Six decisions were issued by Tribunals in employment discrimination claims. Three of these cases were upheld, including a high profile religious/political discrimination case; a sex discrimination case and disability discrimination case. The religious/political discrimination case – Lennon v Department of Regional Development (DRD) established that public appointments, including those which involve the exercise of a Minister's discretion, are fully within the protection of the legislation.

Three decisions were issued where the discrimination claims were dismissed.

Two decisions were issued in service provision claims. Both were dismissed. Belfast Recorders Court dismissed claims of racial discrimination issued by three Traveller women; and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal dismissed a claim of disability discrimination in educational provision.

The Commission concluded 62 cases by way of negotiated or conciliated settlement. All settlements included appropriate compensation and terms such as agreements to review practises policies and procedures.

In total, taking into account both decisions and settlements, £652,219 compensation was recovered for claimants in 2012/13.



In addition the Commission's involvement in a further 16 cases was concluded following reviews of the strategic value of each of these cases, or upon the claimants' decision to withdraw from proceedings.

85% of cases were concluded within 12 months of assistance – either by settlement, decision or by withdrawal of assistance. Only three separate actions (on behalf of 13 people) took longer than 12 months to conclude.

Highlighting protections and publicising outcomes

- promoting cases through the media and stakeholder networks;
- publicising an Annual Review of Decisions and Settlements;

Publicising cases of discrimination in the media continues to form a central pillar of our communications strategy. Of the nine cases publicised during 2012/13, Lennon v DRD received the most media coverage. The others were well covered with two of them securing front page coverage.

Case work has also been used in a range of stakeholder engagements, and have been highlighted in the SoMe and Getting a Fair Share? projects and at other stakeholder events. One of these was 'Treated Unfairly', a legal platform event organised for the broad range of advice providers across Northern Ireland, including the Northern Ireland Citizens Advice Bureaux, Advice NI, political constituency teams, trade unions and other representative groups.

The legal team hosted academics from Iraq on the Scholars at Risk programme facilitated by Queen's University Belfast and contributed regularly to the NI Employment Lawyers Group. Other initiatives during the year included an event with advisors from the race sector and the production of a DVD on Irish Travellers Healthcare, which highlights the Commission assistance work.

The Decisions and Settlements review for 2011/12 was published on-line with a limited print run. The information for the 2012/13 review of cases is being collated for publication in 2013/14.

4. Delivering effective and efficient services

The Commission recognises that it is, and will continue to be, operating within a context of greater efficiency requirements over the next few years. Within the resources available to the Commission, we will continue our business improvement programme and seek to achieve excellence in public service delivery. The Commission is committed to developing benchmarks, using best practice in the public and private sectors against which to measure our performance and service delivery.

The Commission will continue to demonstrate strong internal control and operate within an effective governance framework, guided by the principles of transparency, independence and accountability.

It will also continue to deliver the efficiency services required and demonstrate value for money and the effectiveness of our work. The Commission has been an active partner in a shared services project with the other Arms Length Bodies which are sponsored by OFMDFM. This has included the sharing of office space, IT and finance services and we are fully committed to progressing and deepening this work over the next three years. Outlined below is the progress made in 2012/13.

Corporate Governance

- timely preparation and publication of Annual Report and Accounts;
- positive Audit outcomes and timely addressing of issues raised;
- effective risk management.

The Commission continues to demonstrate high levels of governance and internal control.

In line with its targets the Annual Report and Accounts were prepared in compliance with the timetable and standards set by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) and laid before the Assembly on 17 July 2012.

The Commission received another unqualified audit for its 2011/12 Annual Report and Accounts and a positive Report to those charged with Governance, which contained no Priority 1 issues.

Since September 2010, no audits of the Commission's operations have received a Priority 1 recommendation and throughout this year this was continued. All work undertaken by the Commission's internal auditors provided at least satisfactory assurance, with substantial assurance being provided in a number of areas.

Of the areas reviewed this year; Purchasing and Procurement, Management of SLAs, Information Management and Business Continuity Management all obtained Substantial assurance ratings. Satisfactory ratings were reported in the reviews of Programme Expenditure Management and the Commission's Legal Funding Process.

In the internal auditors Annual Report a rating of Substantial Assurance was recorded for the Commission's overall control environment, risk management procedures and governance framework.

During 2012/13, 83.8% of audit recommendations were implemented within twelve weeks of the Audit and Risk Committee's consideration of the audit report. This is below the 95% target set by the Commission. Steps are being taken to address any outstanding recommendations and to implement all recommendations in a timelier manner.

Risk management continues to be a key element of the Commission's management and control framework and guides the work undertaken by internal audit, whose findings in turn are used to further develop and control risk in the Commission. In line with its Risk Management Policy, the Corporate Risk Register was regularly reviewed by the management team, by other risk owners and by the Audit and Risk Committee at each of its meetings. It was also discussed on two occasions by the full Commission. Quarterly Stewardship reports were provided to OFMDFM and the Commission's Audit and Risk Committee throughout the year. All Commissioners and staff were provided with Corporate Governance refresher training in March 2013.

Budgetary Control

- delivering required efficiency savings;
- generating at least £250k of additional income;
- maintaining the overall budget variance to within 2%.

In 2012/13 the Commission deliver the required annual efficiency savings of a further £175k.

The target of generating at least £250k income from activities was also met. During 2012/13, £358,622 of income was generated. The main sources of income were the recovery of rent and other accommodation costs and the recovery of secondment costs.

By the year end, £6.607m (99.8%) of the budget was spent, a variance of £16k (0.2%). During the year, easements totalling £350k were returned to OFMDFM. Most of this related to an unspent provision for potential staff severance costs. The Department has agreed to restore this, as necessary, in future years.

The Commission continues to strive to control its staffing costs. During 2012/13 staffing costs increased by £87k. There was however a reduction in the average number of full-time equivalent posts from 117 to 116.

Corporate and Business planning

- effective monitoring of business plan and budget;
- effective delivery of service level agreements (SLAs) and shared services projects.

During the course of the year, progress on the 2012/13 Business Plan and budget was reported to the Commission on quarterly basis. By the year end a new Business Plan and budget for 2013/14 were in place. Improvements in budget profiling were reflected in reduced variances across budget areas during the year and the ability to take prompt remedial action where necessary.

During the year SLAs for ICT services were delivered for the Commissioner for Older People (COPNI), the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. SLAs for some financial services were delivered for COPNI and the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission (NIJAC). The Commission is in discussion with some other Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) in relation to the provision of human resources support.

The Commission continues to share Equality House and premises costs with COPNI and NICCY. During the year OFMDFM advised the Commission that accommodation would not be shared with the Commission for Victims and Survivors, which would not be moving to Equality House, as previously envisaged.

Discussions will continue with our Sponsoring Department OFMDFM and other Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) to promote further sharing of accommodation and other resources, generating additional efficiencies and cost savings, as well as considering further reductions in staffing levels, with minimal impact on service delivery, staff welfare and the public purse.

Business Improvement

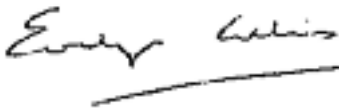
- maintaining external accreditations;
- implementation of European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) action plan;
- establishing benchmarking systems and standards;
- completing a staff satisfaction and service delivery survey.

In 2009 the Commission was accredited under the Investor in People (IIP) scheme to Bronze level. During this year the Commission achieved its key target of successful re-accreditation of its IIP status and the enhancing of its achievement from Bronze level to Silver.

During the year the Commission also retained the accreditations for its legal casework teams and Corporate Services Division, under Lexcel and ISO 9001, respectively.

Although progress was made with the implementation of EFQM and the development of benchmarking systems and standards, it was less than was planned and more substantial progress in these areas will be sought in 2013/14.

In addition to the public and external stakeholder surveys completed this year and reported earlier, the Commission also undertook a staff survey in relation to the Commission's delivery of its corporate services to them. In general, a high and improved level of delivery and satisfaction was recorded. Results of the survey were reported back to the staff and at the year end an improvement plan was being prepared based on the staff feedback. A more comprehensive survey of staff satisfaction and areas for improvement is planned for next year.



Evelyn Collins CBE

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

3 July 2013

Remuneration Report

Remuneration Report

Remuneration Policy

The remuneration of senior civil servants is set by the Minister for Finance and Personnel. The Minister approved a restructured SCS pay settlement broadly in line with the Senior Salaries Review Board report which he commissioned in 2010. The commitment to a Pay and Grading Review for SCS was the second phase of the equal pay settlement approved by the Executive.

Of the Commission's senior management, only the Chief Executive has remuneration arrangements analogous to a senior civil servant. The remuneration of the other staff included in the remuneration report and all other Commission staff follows that of the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

The remuneration of Commission members is determined by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Service Contracts

Commission staff appointments are made in accordance with the Commission's Recruitment Policy which requires appointment to be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition but also includes the circumstances when appointments may otherwise be made.

Unless otherwise stated below, the staff covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Commission members are appointed by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland following open competition.

Salary and pension entitlements

The following section provides details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Commissioners and the most senior management of the Commission.

Remuneration: Commissioners (Audited Information)

Commissioner	2012-2013			2011-2012		
	Salary £'000	Bonus Payments £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Salary £'000	Bonus Payments £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)
Michael Wardlow Chief Commissioner	50-55 (FTE 70-75)	0	0	0-5 (FTE 70-75)	0	0
Bob Collins Chief Commissioner (to 31 January 2012)	0	0	0	65-70 (FTE 80-85)	0	0
Jane Morrice Deputy Chief Commissioner	5-10	0	0	5-10	0	0
Stella Burnside	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Fidelma Carolan	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Anna Carragher	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Kit Chivers	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Patricia Feeney	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Milton Kerr	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Charo Lanao-Madden	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Lyn McBriar	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Stephen McIlveen	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Liam Maskey	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Dermot Nesbitt	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Peter Sheridan	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Norman Trotter	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0
Murray Watt	0-5	0	0	0-5	0	0

Remuneration: Senior Management (Audited Information)

Official	2012-2013			2011-2012		
	Salary £'000	Bonus Payments £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Salary £'000	Bonus Payments £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)
Evelyn Collins Chief Executive	85-90*	0	0	75-80	0	0
Keith Brown Head of Corporate Services	60-65	0	0	60-65	0	0
Eileen Lavery Head of Legal, Policy and Research	60-65	0	0	60-65	0	0

* This includes a 1% non consolidated increase for 2012/13 and other pay awards owing from the period 2009-12.

Fair Pay Review Disclosure

	2013 £	2012 £
Band of Highest Paid Employee - Chief Executive	75,000 – 80,000	75,000 – 80,000
Median Other Staff Remuneration	27,066	27,115
Ratio	2.9	2.9

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland is required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest paid employee in the organisation and the median remuneration of the Commission's workforce.

The banded remuneration of the highest paid employee in the Commission in the financial year 2012/13 was £75,000 to £80,000 (2011/12, £75,000 to £80,000). This was 2.9 times (2011/12, 2.9 times) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £27,066 (2011/12, £27,115).

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation and any gratia payments.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

No benefits in kind were paid to Commissioners or staff during this period.

Bonuses

Bonuses for staff are based on performance levels attained and are made as part of the appraisal process. Bonuses relate to the performance in the year in which they become payable to the individual. The bonuses reported in the 2012/13 relate to performance in 2012/13 and the comparative bonuses reported for 2011/12 relate to the performance in 2011/12. Due to the current public sector pay freeze, no bonuses to staff were payable in either of these years.

No bonus payments were paid to Commissioners in these years.

No other employee received more than the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer in either year.

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance related pay, benefits-in-kind as well as severance payments. It does not include employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

Pension Benefits (Audited Information)

	Accrued pension increase at age 60 as at 31/03/12 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 £'000	CETV at 31/3/12	CETV at 31/3/11*	Real increase in CETV
Michael Wardlow Chief Commissioner (from 1 March 2012)	0-5 plus lump sum 0	0-2.5 plus lump sum 0	20	1	15
Evelyn Collins Chief Executive	25-30 plus lump sum 80-85	(0-2.5) plus lump sum (0-2.5)	548	514	3
Keith Brown Head of Corporate Services	15-20 plus lump sum 55-60	0-2.5 plus lump sum (5-7.5)	408	345	43
Eileen Lavery Head of Legal, Policy and Research	25-30 plus lump sum 80-85	0-2.5 plus lump sum 0-2.5	542	510	2

The Equality Commission made no employer contributions to a Partnership Pension Account for any of the above.

Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Pension arrangements

Pension benefits are provided through the Northern Ireland Civil Service pension arrangements which are administered by Civil Service Pensions (CSP).

Commission members other than the Chief Commissioner do not receive any pension entitlements.

There were no partnership pension accounts.

The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) [PCSPS (NI)] is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but the Equality Commission is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The most up to date actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2010 and details of this valuation are available in the PCSPS (NI) resource accounts.

For 2012/13, employer contributions of £719,065 (2011/2012 £678,304) at one of four rates in the range 18% to 25% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands were paid. The scheme's Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. However HM Treasury has instructed the scheme to cease further work on the March 2010 valuation. A new valuation scheme based on data as at 31 March 2012 is currently being undertaken by the Actuary to review employer contribution rates for the introduction of a new career average scheme from April 2015. From 2013/14 the rates will remain in the range 18% to 25%. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2012/13 to be paid when the members retire and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. No such employer contributions were made in this year.

No staff left on grounds of ill-health retirement.

Staff in post prior to 30 July 2007 may be in one of three statutory based 'final salary' defined benefit arrangements (classic, premium and classic plus). These arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year.

From April 2011 pensions payable under classic, premium and classic plus are increased annually in line with changes in the Consumer Prices Index (CPI). Prior to 2011, pensions were increased in line with changes in the Retail Prices Index (RPI).

New entrants joining on or after 1 October 2002 and before 30 July 2007 could choose between membership of premium or joining a good quality 'money purchase' stakeholder arrangement with a significant employer contribution (partnership pension account).

New entrants joining on or after 30 July 2007 are eligible for membership of the nuvos arrangement or they can opt for a partnership pension account.

Nuvos is a 'Career Average Revalued Earnings' (CARE) arrangement in which members accrue pension benefits at a percentage rate of annual pensionable earnings throughout the period of the scheme membership. The current rate is 2.3%.

CARE pension benefits are increased annually in line with increases in the CPI. For 2013, public service pensions will be increased by 2.2% with effect from 8 April 2013.

Employee contributions are determined by the level of pensionable earnings. The current rates are as follows:

Members of **classic**:

Annual pensionable earnings (full-time equivalent basis)	New 2013 contribution rate before tax relief
Up to £15,000	1.50%
£15,001-£21,000	2.70%
£21,001-£30,000	3.88%
£30,001-£50,000	4.67%
£50,001-£60,000	5.46%
Over £60,000	6.25%

Members of **premium, nuvos** and **classic plus**:

Annual pensionable earnings (full-time equivalent basis)	New 2013 contribution rate before tax relief
Up to £15,000	3.50%
£15,001-£21,000	4.70%
£21,001-£30,000	5.88%
£30,001-£50,000	6.67%
£50,001-£60,000	7.46%
Over £60,000	8.25%

Benefits in classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. For premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum (but members may give up (commute) some of their pension to provide a lump sum). Classic plus is essentially a variation of premium, but with benefits in respect of service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per classic.

The partnership pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age. Pension age is 60 for members of **classic**, **premium**, and **classic plus** and 65 for members of **nuvos**. Further details about the CSP arrangements can be found at the website www.dfpni.gov.uk/civilservicepensions-ni.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pensions benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003-04 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the CSP arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost.

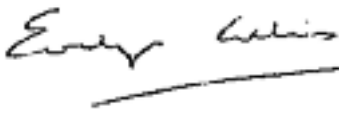
CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Compensation for Loss of Office

There was no compensation for loss of office during the year.



Evelyn Collins CBE

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

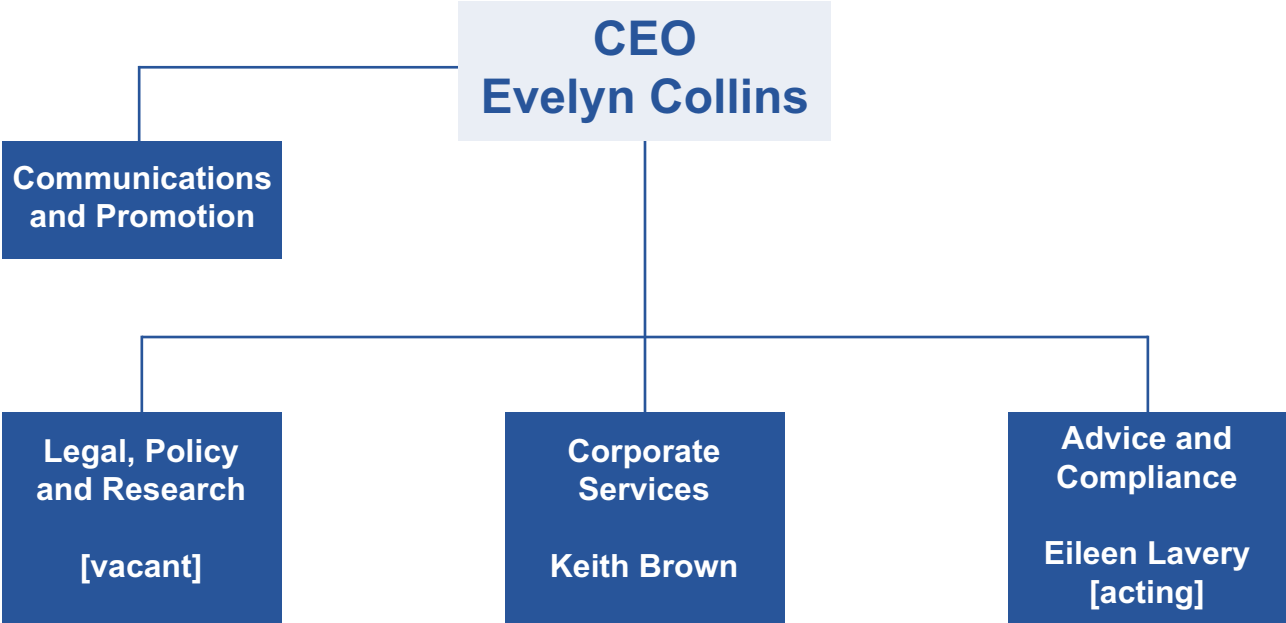
3 July 2013

Appendices

1. Organisational Structure
2. Community Background and Gender Composition of Equality Commission Staff
3. Committee Membership

Appendix One

Equality Commission Organisational Structure



Appendix Two

Community background and gender composition of Equality Commission staff at 1 January 2013

Grade	Total	P	RC	ND*	M	F
Senior Mgt Team	3	2 (66.6%)	1 (33.3%)		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.6%)
All Staff** [excl. ND]	140 [136]	46 (32.8%) [33.8%]	90 (64.3%) [66.2%]	4 (2.9%)	49 (35.0%)	91 (65%)

* Community background could not be determined

** Includes staff on career break

This year shows a fall of one in the number of employees from, or could be associated with, the Protestant community and a fall of one in employees from the Roman Catholic community. This results in a decrease in the composition of Protestant staff from [34.1%] last year to [33.8%] at 1 January 2013.

One recruitment exercise, for a Research Officer, took place in 2012. The table below records the outcome. Given the small numbers involved no conclusions can be drawn from the statistical outturn. As the individual concerned was an existing employee there was no net impact on the Commission's composition.

Grade	Total	P	RC	ND*	M	F
Applicants	36	12 (33.3%)	23 (63.9%)	1(2.8)	12 (33.3%)	24 (66.6%)
Appointees	1	**	**	**	0	1 (100%)

* Community background could not be determined

** Individual's community background could be identified

The composition of the working age population in Northern Ireland (16-64) at the time of the most recent census in 2011 was [50.8%] Protestant and [49.2%] Roman Catholic. The comparable figures from the previous 2001 Census were [57.3%] Protestant and [42.7%] Roman Catholic.

The composition of the population (age 16-34) at the time of the Census was [45.8%] Protestant and [54.2%] Roman Catholic.

Developments in 2012/13

In July 2012, the Commission undertook a survey of its staff across the equality grounds in addition to the annual monitoring it undertakes of community background. Of the 124 employees surveyed, 115 (93%) completed the questionnaire.

Below is a summary of some of the figures for the areas other than community background and gender.

- 98% of employees are white;
- 43% classified themselves as British, 41% Irish, 10% British/Irish or Northern Irish and 6% other. Other nationalities included Polish, English and German;
- 25% of Commission employees classified themselves as either having a disability or a long term illness;
- 20% of employees were aged under 35 and 17% aged 55+
- Those aged 35 - 44 recorded the highest incidences of long term illness (40%), the incidence of long term illness amongst those 55+ was 25%;
- 95% classified themselves as being attracted to someone of a different sex, 5% classified themselves as being attracted to someone of the same sex or did not disclose their sexual orientation;
- 74% of Commission employees have dependants;
- Additional to the flexihour scheme, 43% of employees availed of some other form of flexible working, 11% of employees availed of more than one type of arrangement;
- 84% of those availing of a flexible working arrangement were female;
- Almost half of those with a long term illness or disability availed of a flexible working arrangement.

The findings of the audit have been used to assist in the development of the Commission's Employment Equality Plans.

During this year a Commissioner led working group was established to review and further develop the Commission's affirmative action plans and to scrutinise progress on its delivery.

In May 2012 the group identified a number of key areas that should provide the focus for work over the longer term:

- providing assurance that the Commission's employment procedures remain fit for purpose;
- building on the work that has already been done to establish links with local community organisations and schools;
- continue to build trust and confidence with the wider community and particularly opinion formers and critics.

Appendix Three

Committee Membership

The following Commissioners served on the Commission's Committees during the period 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013

Audit & Risk Committee

COMMISSIONER	MEETINGS ATTENDED (5)
Norman Trotter (Chair)	5
Jane Morrice	5
Stella Burnside	2
Kit Chivers	4
Peter Sheridan	2

Statutory Duty Investigations Committee

COMMISSIONER	MEETINGS ATTENDED (5)
Kit Chivers (Chair)	5
Bob Collins	5
Fidelma Carolan	4
Murray Watt	5
Lyn McBriar	4

Equality Scheme Approvals Committee

COMMISSIONER	MEETINGS ATTENDED (5)
Jane Morrice (Chair)	5
Michael Wardlow	5
Patricia Feeney	3
Stephen McIlveen	4
Dermot Nesbitt	4
Peter Sheridan	1
Stella Burnside	3
Norman Trotter	1



Legal Funding Committee

The Legal Funding Committee meets fortnightly. Committee members are rotated to ensure that each meeting has three committee members present. The Chair of this Committee rotates between all members. In addition to the set meetings, Commissioners may be called upon to consider emergency applications as they arise.

During 2012/13 the following Commissioners served on Legal Funding Committees: Anna Carragher, Patricia Feeney, Milton Kerr, Charo Lanao- Madden, Liam Maskey, Stephen McIlveen, Lyn McBriar, Norman Trotter, Michael Wardlow,

Financial Statements



Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**Equality Commission
for
Northern Ireland**

Financial Statements

**For 12 months ended
31 March 2013**

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Statement of the Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Under Paragraph 7(2) (a) of Schedule 8 of the Northern Ireland Act 1988, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister with the approval of the Department of Finance and Personnel has directed the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Commission and of its application of resources, changes in taxpayers' equity and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on an ongoing concern basis.

The Accounting Officer of the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister has designated the Chief Executive of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland as the Accounting Officer of the Commission.

The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Commission's assets, are set out in the Non-Departmental Public Bodies Accounting Officer's Memorandum and published by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland.

Signed by:



Evelyn Collins CBE

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

3 July 2013

Governance Statement

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the Commission's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and Commission assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland.

The Governance Framework

The Commission

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland is an executive non departmental public body (NDPB) established as a body corporate by Section 73 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Commission's primary source of income is grant-in-aid provided by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). Statutory authority for the payment of grant-in-aid is contained in Schedule 8 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Relationships between the Commission and the Ministers and their Department are governed by the "arm's length" principle, wherein the primary role of Ministers is to set the Commission's legal and financial framework including the structure of its funding and governance.

These responsibilities are discharged on a day-to-day basis on the Minister's behalf by the Sponsoring Department. Within this framework, it is the role of the Commission to determine its equality policies and activities in keeping with its statutory responsibilities and the objectives of Government policy.

The Commission has agreed a Management Statement with OFMDFM. This sets out the relationship between the two organisations and defines the financial and administrative framework within which the Commission operates. It also sets out the conditions on which grant-in-aid is paid to the Commission and the delegations within which the Commission operates. The Management Statement has been approved by Ministers responsible for OFMDFM.

It is supplemented by a Financial Memorandum agreed with the Commission and approved by OFMDFM and the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP).

A joint review of the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum is presently ongoing.

The main pieces of legislation from which the Commission derives its duties and powers are:

- Equal Pay Act (NI) 1970, as amended
- Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976, as amended
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended
- Race Relations (NI) Order 1997, as amended
- Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, as amended
- Northern Ireland Act 1998
- Equality (Disability, etc.) (NI) Order 2000
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003, as amended
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005, as amended
- Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006, as amended
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006, as amended

The Commission is led by a Chief Commissioner, supported by a Deputy Chief Commissioner. Including the Chief Commissioner and Deputy Chief Commissioner there are currently 16 Commissioners. The responsibilities of the Chief Commissioner and Commissioners are set out in the founding legislation and more fully in the Code of Practice agreed between the Sponsoring Department and the Commission.

A record of Commissioners attendance during 2012/13 can be found at page 3 of Director's Report.

Commissioners' Interests

An up to date register of Commissioners' interests is maintained by the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer and is available for inspection at the Commission's offices in Equality House, 7-9 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast BT2 7DP.

Commissioners and Senior Executives' remuneration is included in the Remuneration Report published in the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts.

Accounting Officer

The Commission's Chief Executive has been designated as the Accounting Officer. The Accounting Officer's role and responsibilities are set out in the Management Statement and in more detail in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI).

The Equality Commission's Annual Report and Accounts are prepared in accordance with Schedule 8 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and in a form directed by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister with the approval of the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Committees

Schedule 8 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 allows the Commission to make provision for the discharge of its functions by committees and the Commission has operated with a number of different Committee structures since it was established.

At present, there are three Committees of the Commission in addition to an Audit and Risk Committee

- Legal Funding Committee
- Statutory Duties Investigation Committee
- Section 75 Equality Scheme Approvals Committee

Attendance records for these Committees can be found at Appendix Three of the Annual Report.

Audit and Risk Committee

The Commission seeks to ensure high standards of corporate governance and levels of compliance with the values of public service. It has an Audit and Risk Committee which oversees internal audit arrangements and ensures that they are conducted in accordance with the objectives and standards of the Government Internal Audit Manual. The Committee also oversees the Commission's arrangements for risk management. The Committee's responsibilities are set out in its Terms of Reference, which were last reviewed in March 2011.

The Audit and Risk Committee meets at least four times per year. Minutes of Audit and Risk Committee meetings are provided to the full Commission and the Chair of the Committee reports to Commission meetings at regular intervals. On an annual basis, the Audit and Risk Committee undertakes a self assessment of its operations and a formal written report of its work is presented to the Commission.

Internal Audit undertook a review of the Commission's Committee structures and processes and Board Effectiveness in May 2012. The audit provided Satisfactory assurance.

Audit & Risk Committee

COMMISSIONER	MEETINGS ATTENDED (5)
Norman Trotter (Chair)	5
Jane Morrice	5
Stella Burnside	2
Kit Chivers	4
Peter Sheridan	2

Risk Management

The Commission has appropriate procedures in place to ensure that it has identified its objectives and risks and determined a control strategy for its strategic risks. A corporate approach to risk, involving Commissioners, the Executive Team and other staff is taken.

As the Accounting Officer, I have overall responsibility for the Commission's corporate business and decisions and ensuring the effective management of the key associated risks. Ownership of risks has been allocated to the relevant staff at appropriate levels and they have received the necessary training to assist them in handling these risks.

Risk management is cascaded down the organisation and Risk Registers are produced for each Division. Quarterly stewardship statements are completed by corporate risk owners and forwarded to me as Accounting Officer. These provide me with assurance that risk management processes are effective and operating in line with the Commission's risk management framework.

As Accounting Officer, I submit a quarterly statement to the Audit and Risk Committee and to the Commission's Sponsoring Department OFMDFM.

The risk and control framework

The key elements of the Commission's risk management strategy are outlined in our formal Risk Management Policy. The policy outlines the respective roles and responsibilities of the Accounting Officer, Commission, Audit and Risk Committee and Management Board.

Consideration of risk forms the basis of our Strategic Internal Audit Programme which is mapped to the Corporate Risk Register.

The Commission has ensured that procedures are in place for verifying that risk management and internal control are regularly reviewed and reported on. Risk appetite is assessed by the Commission and targets approved by the Commission are included on the risk register.

Corporate Risk is routinely reviewed by the Management Board and at each Audit and Risk Committee meeting and the Corporate Risk Register updated as necessary. The Commission, its Audit and Risk Committee and the Management Board receive regular reports on internal control and monitor progress on addressing internal audit recommendations.

During the year ending 31 March 2013, the Commission reviewed and updated its Risk Management Policy.

Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Commission's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place in the Commission for the year ended 31 March 2013 and up to the date of approval of the Annual Report and Accounts, and accords with Department of Finance and Personnel guidance.

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within the Commission who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their Report to those charged with Governance. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Commission and its Audit and Risk Committee and plans to address weaknesses to ensure continuous improvement of the system are in place.

Commissioners have individual and collective responsibility for ensuring that the Commission fulfils its functions in accordance with its statutory remit and that its control, regulation and monitoring of its activities ensure value for money within a framework of best practice, regularity and propriety.


The Commission has an internal audit service, provided by Goldblatt McGuigan, which operates to standards defined in the Government Internal Audit Manual. As submits reports, which include the Head of Internal Audit's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Commission's system of internal control together with recommendations for improvement.

Business Planning

The Commission has in place a Corporate Plan approved by the OFMDFM Ministers, covering the period 2012-2015. This Plan is supported by annual Business Plans.

Information Assurance

The Commission is proactive in developing and implementing policies and procedural guidance to manage Information Risk. Information risk management is a key element of information governance and is an integral part of good management.



The Commission undertakes regular reviews of its ICT infrastructure and security arrangements and information security risks and controls are included on the Commission's Corporate ICT risk register. During 2012/13 an audit of the Commission's Information Management arrangements was undertaken. Substantial assurance was provided. No data protection incidents occurred during the year.

The Commission has a Freedom of Information policy and satisfactory arrangements in place to ensure compliance. The Commission's Data Protection and Freedom of Information Officer receives regular training and Divisional coordinators are briefed. The Commission is aware of and has approved these arrangements.

Business Continuity Plans

The Commission has completed a recent business continuity risk assessment and up to date business continuity and other contingency arrangements are in place. The Business Continuity Management arrangements were audited during this year and Substantial assurance was provided by the review.

Staff

Appropriate arrangements for the management of Gifts and Hospitality are in place and all offers are included on a Gifts and Hospitality Register. The Commission's Code of Conduct for Staff outlines the arrangements for whistle blowing.

The Commission has a Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan. There were no incidents of fraud or potential fraud to report over the current period.

Staff receive regular training in Governance, Risk Management and Fraud Awareness.

A Managing Attendance Policy is in place and quarterly indicators of staff absence are provided to management in the Commission and to OFMDFM Sponsoring Team.

Third Party Organisations

Although it has the vires to award grants under some of the legislation from which it derives its powers and duties, the Commission has not utilised its discretion in relation to the provision of such grants.

Related party transactions are reported in its Annual Accounts.

Internal & External Audit Reports

The Commission's external auditor is the Northern Ireland Audit Office. It audits and certifies the Commission's Financial Statements and issues a Report to those charged with Governance.

During the current year the internal auditors have conducted reviews in line with their Annual Audit Plan covering:

Audit Area	Status	Assurance Rating
Programme Expenditure Management	Completed	Satisfactory
Legal Funding Process	Completed	Satisfactory
Purchasing and Procurement	Completed	Substantial
Information Management	Completed	Substantial
Business Continuity Management	Completed	Substantial
Management of SLAs	Completed	Substantial

Risk Management Status

I am satisfied that the controls in place to manage risks for which I am responsible are appropriate. They provide reasonable assurance that the risk will not occur or if it does occur that it will be detected and corrected in sufficient time to reduce the impact of the risk to tolerable or negligible levels.

Significant internal control issues

The continuing requirement for the effective management of budgetary reductions continues to be a significant risk facing the Commission. The Commission has plans in place to reduce costs in staffing, the largest area of expenditure, and to deliver the efficiency savings sought by its Sponsoring Department. These plans include cost sharing with other ALBs and the generation of income from the provision of shared services to a number of these bodies.



Evelyn Collins CBE

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer
3 July 2013

The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Northern Ireland Assembly

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland for the year ended 31 March 2013 under the Northern Ireland Act 1998. These comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

Respective responsibilities of the Accounting Officer and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. My responsibility is to examine, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998 conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition I read all the financial and non-financial information in the Annual Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies I consider the implications for my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Opinion on Regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Opinion on financial statements

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland's affairs as at 31 March 2013 and of the net expenditure, cash flows and changes in taxpayers' equity for the year then ended; and
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion:

- the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister directions made under the Northern Ireland Act 1998; and
- the information given in the Director's Report and Chief Executive's Management Commentary for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

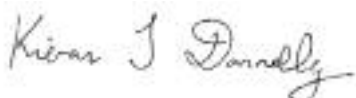
Matters on which I report by exception

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with Department of Finance and Personnel's guidance.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.



KJ Donnelly
Comptroller and Auditor General
Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
Belfast
BT7 1EU

5th July 2013

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2013

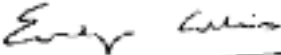
	Note	2012-13 £	2011-12 £
Expenditure			
Staff and Commissioners' Costs	3	(4,632,089)	(4,545,479)
Depreciation	6	(48,072)	(50,151)
Amortisation	7	(17,089)	(16,274)
Other Expenditures	4	(2,000,647)	(2,056,225)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		(6,697,897)	(6,668,129)
Income			
Income from Activities	5	358,622	157,716
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Expenditure		(6,339,275)	(6,510,413)
 Other Comprehensive Expenditure			
Net gain on revaluation of Plant and Equipment	6	7,619	598
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Comprehensive Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2013		(6,331,656)	(6,509,815)

The notes on pages 65 to 80 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2013

	Note	2013 £	2012 £
Non-Current assets:			
Plant and equipment	6	205,157	107,571
Intangible assets	7	29,924	31,431
Total non-current assets		235,081	139,002
Current assets:			
Trade and other receivables	9	138,070	162,495
Cash and cash equivalents	10	106	125,362
Total current assets		138,176	287,857
Total assets		373,257	426,859
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	(289,503)	(194,350)
Other liabilities		nil	nil
Total current liabilities		(289,503)	(194,350)
Non-current assets plus/less net current assets/liabilities		83,754	232,509
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	12	(333,060)	(350,159)
Total non-current liabilities		(333,060)	(350,159)
Assets less liabilities		(249,306)	(117,650)
Taxpayers' equity			
Revaluation reserve		42,798	35,179
SOCNE reserve		(292,104)	(152,829)
		(249,306)	(117,650)

The financial statements on pages 61 to 80 were approved by the Commission on 3 July 2013 and were signed on its behalf by;

Signed  Evelyn Collins CBE, Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

The notes on pages 65 to 80 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2013

		2012-13 £	2011-12 £
	Note		
Cash Flows from operating activities			
Net Expenditure		(6,339,275)	(6,510,413)
Adjustments for non-cash transactions			
Depreciation	6	48,072	50,151
Amortisation	7	17,089	16,274
Revaluation	6	-	55
 (Increase)/Decrease in trade and other receivables	 9	 24,425	 (52,458)
Increase/(Decrease) in trade payables	11	95,153	(117,095)
Increase/(Decrease) in provisions	12	(17,099)	221,639
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(6,171,635)	(6,391,847)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of plant and equipment	6	(138,039)	(64,551)
Purchase of intangible assets	7	(15,582)	(24,221)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(153,621)	(88,772)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Financing from OFMDFM		6,200,000	6,525,000
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net financing		6,200,000	6,525,000
 Net increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period	 10	 (125,256)	 44,381
 Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		 125,362	 80,981
 Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	 10	 106	 125,362

The notes on pages 65 to 80 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year ended 31 March 2013

	Note	Reval Reserve £	SoCNE Reserve £	Total Reserves £
Balance at 31 March 2011		34,581	(167,416)	(132,835)
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity 2011-12				
Grant from OFMDFM		0	6,525,000	6,525,000
Transfer between reserves Comprehensive Expenditure for the year		0	(6,510,413)	(6,510,413)
Movements in Reserves				
Additions				
Recognised in Statement of Comprehensive Expenditure	6	598	0	598
Balance at 31 March 2012		35,179	(152,829)	(117,650)
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for 2012-13				
Grant from OFMDFM		0	6,200,000	6,200,000
Transfer between reserves Comprehensive Expenditure for the year		0	(6,339,275)	(6,339,275)
Movements in Reserves				
Additions				
Recognised in Statement of Comprehensive Expenditure		7,619	0	7,619
Balance at 31 March 2013		42,798	(292,104)	(249,306)

The notes on pages 65 to 80 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the Accounts

1. Statement of accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with paragraph 7(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the 2012-13 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel for Northern Ireland. The accounting policies contained in FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be the most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Equality Commission for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the Commission are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

1.1 Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets and inventories.

1.2 Non-Current assets

Non-current assets are fully funded by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

Plant and equipment have been valued at historic cost revalued by indices published by the National Statistics Office. A capitalisation threshold of £500 has been applied.

Intangible assets (computer software and licences) are valued at historic cost.

1.3 Depreciation and Amortisation Rates

Depreciation and amortisation are provided on all non-current assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset over its expected life with rates as follows:

IT Equipment	25-33%
Office Equipment	10-33%
Furniture	10%
Fixtures & Fittings	10-33%
Intangible Assets	25-33%

1.4 Inventories

The value of inventories of consumables is immaterial and the Commission does not attribute any value for inventories in the accounts.

1.5 Income

All income from operations is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. Income is based on full cost recovery of services provided.

1.6 Grant in Aid

Grant in Aid received, used to finance activities and expenditure which support the statutory and other objectives of the Commission, are treated as financing. They are credited to the SOCNE Reserve because they are regarded as contributions from a controlling party.

1.7 Leased Assets

Leases are classified as operating leases whenever the terms of the lease do not transfer substantially all the risks and benefits to the lessee. Rentals under operating leases are expensed to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as incurred.

1.8 Financial Instruments

Financial assets and liabilities are recognised on the Statement of Financial Position when the Commission becomes a party to a contractual provision of the instrument.

The Commission's financial assets and liabilities are classified as Loans and Receivables and are held at cost which approximates to their fair value because of their short maturities.

1.9 Provisions


The Commission makes provision for liabilities and charges where, at the Statement of Financial Position date, a legal or constructive liability exists (that is a present obligation from past events exists), where the transfer of economic benefits is probable and a reasonable estimate can be made. IAS 37 requires that where the effect of the time value of money is material the amount of a provision should be the present value of the expenditures expected to be required to settle the obligation. Where cash flows have been adjusted for risk the standard requires the use of a risk free discount rate.

1.10 Legal Fees

The Commission makes provision for expenditure authorised for legal assistance with letters of commitment to individuals before legal assistance is commissioned to an external provider.

1.11 Pensions

Past and present staff have the opportunity to join the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI). The PCSPS (NI) is a non-funded defined benefit scheme which produces its own resource accounts, but the Commission is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities.



The most up-to-date actuarial valuation was carried out on 31 March 2010 and these details are available in the PCSPS (NI) resource accounts.

1.12 VAT

The Commission is not registered for VAT.

1.13 Staff Costs

Under IAS19, Employee Benefits legislation, all staff costs must be recorded as an expense as soon as an organisation is obligated to pay them. This includes the cost of any holiday pay, flexible time owed at the year end.

1.14 Adoption of New and Revised Standards

The IASB have issued new and amended standards (IFRS 10, IFRS 11 & IFRS 12) that affect the consolidation and reporting of subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures. These standards have an effective date of January 2013, and EU adoption is due from 1 January 2014. The application of these IFRS changes is subject to further review by Treasury and the other Relevant Authorities before due process consultation.

Accounting boundary IFRS' are currently adapted in the FReM so that the Westminster departmental accounting boundary is based on ONS control criteria, as designated by Treasury. A review of the NI financial process is currently under discussion with the Executive, which will bring NI departments under the same adaptation. Should this go ahead, the impact on departments is expected to focus around the disclosure requirements under IFRS 12. The impact on the consolidation boundary of NDPB's and trading funds will be subject to review, in particular, where control could be determined to exist due to exposure to variable returns (IFRS 10), and where joint arrangements need reassessing.

2. Statement of operating costs by operating segment

Under Schedule 8, paragraph 5 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Commission is required to give details of how resources have been divided between the functions previously exercised by the bodies dissolved at the time of its formation.

	Salaries & Associated Costs £	Programme Costs £	*Other Costs £	12 mths to 31/03/2013 Total £	Salaries & Associated Costs £	Programme Costs £	*Other Costs £	12 mths to 31/03/2012 Total £
Integrated/ New Areas	828,774	425,217	0	1,253,991	1,368,803	229,770	0	1,598,573
Disability	562,048	102,067	0	664,115	385,480	113,129	0	498,609
Religion & Politics	680,133	64,744	0	744,877	585,639	14,095	0	599,734
Gender	388,056	80,696	0	468,752	216,205	62,748	0	278,953
Race	466,816	72,155	0	538,971	278,526	97,919	0	376,445
Statutory Duty	381,902	966	0	382,868	380,154	11,848	0	392,002
Resources	860,298	68,238	0	928,536	732,867	28,840	0	761,707
Executive	312,365	0	0	312,365	422,613	0	0	422,613
Total Costs	4,480,392	814,083	0	5,294,475	4,370,287	558,349	0	4,928,636
Members Costs	151,697	4,300	0	155,997	175,192	9,677	0	184,869
Other Costs	0	0	888,803	888,803	0	0	1,396,908	1,396,908
Total	4,632,089	818,383	888,803	6,339,275	4,545,479	568,026	1,396,908	6,510,413

* Other costs include general administrative costs, premises and non cash costs less income from activities.

3. Staff numbers and related costs

3(a) Staff and Commissioner costs comprise:

				2012-2013	2011-2012
	Commissioners	Permanently employed staff	Others	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Wages and Salaries	133,667	3,492,503	4,319	3,630,489	3,586,923
Social security costs	5,722	264,505	0	270,227	263,692
Other pension costs	12,308	719,065	0	731,373	694,864
Total net costs	151,697	4,476,073	4,319	4,632,089	4,545,479

3(b) Pension disclosure

The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) [PCSPS (NI)] is an un-funded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but the Equality Commission is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The most up to date actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2010 and details of this valuation are available in the PCSPS (NI) resource accounts.

For 2012/13, employer contributions of £719,065 (2011/2012 £678,304) at one of four rates in the range 18% to 25% of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme's Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. However HM Treasury has instructed the scheme to cease further work on the March 2010 valuation. A new valuation scheme based on data as at 31 March 2012 is currently being undertaken by the Actuary to review employer contribution rates for the introduction of a new career average scheme from April 2015. From 2013/14 the rates will remain in the range 18% to 25%. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2012/13 to be paid when the members retire and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. No such employer contributions were made in this year.

No staff left on grounds of ill-health retirement.

3(c) Average number of persons employed

The average number of whole-time equivalent persons employed during the year was as follows.

			2012-2013	2011-2012
	Permanent staff	Others	Total	Total
Directly Employed	116	0	116	117
Other	0	0	0	0
Total	116	0	116	117

3(d) Reporting of Civil Service and other compensation schemes – exit packages

There were no exit packages paid in the year and no exit packages paid in the previous year.

Redundancy and other departure costs are paid in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme (Northern Ireland), a statutory scheme made under the Superannuation (Northern Ireland) Order 1972. Exit costs are accounted for in full in the year of departure. Where the department has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the Commission and not by the Civil Service pension scheme. Ill-health retirement costs are met by the pension scheme.

4. Other Expenditure

	Note	2012-13	2011-12
		£	£
General Costs			
Travel and Subsistence		26,718	27,574
Staff Recruitment		4,282	0
Staff Costs (incl. severance)		26,020	257,240
Postage		27,468	20,831
Telephones		51,195	50,758
Hospitality		104	133
Audit		10,900	12,776
Insurance		18,171	10,708
Miscellaneous		12,517	9,760
Office Consumables		56,528	50,320
R&M Equipment		1,625	2,243
Annual Contracts		78,233	81,389
Legal Costs		0	9,410
Corporate Services		10,987	6,039
		324,748	539,181

Premises		
Rents	346,806	448,575
Rates	203,853	199,119
Service Charge	24,435	18,290
Fuel Charge	70,286	65,677
R&M Buildings	71,673	58,690
Facilities	140,463	158,612
	857,516	948,963
Programme		
Education & Advice	363,232	171,647
Legal Fees	319,305	287,060
Other	135,846	109,319
	818,383	568,026
Non-Cash Costs		
Revaluation of Fixed Assets	0	55
	2,000,647	2,056,225
Depreciation	48,072	50,151
Amortisation	17,089	16,274

The Commission paid £1,175 to the Northern Ireland Audit Office for its participation in the National Fraud Initiative.

The audit fee for the year was £11,778 adjusted for an over accrual by ECNI in 2011/12.

5. Income

Source	2012-13	2011-12
	Total	Total
	£	£
Service Level Agreements	76,951	42,517
EU Twinning project	0	19,749
Access to Work	0	468
Secondment recovery	102,457	33,564
Accommodation	167,393	53,442
Other	11,821	7,976
	358,622	157,716

All income is based on full cost recovery.

6. Plant and equipment

2012-13

	Information Technology £	Office Equipment £	Furniture £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Total £
Cost/Valuation					
At 1 April 2012	359,085	92,029	320,643	99,968	871,725
Additions	25,573	29,081	0	83,385	138,039
Disposals	(87,342)	0	0	0	(87,342)
Revaluations	39,115	1,996	5,584	1,635	48,330
At 31 March 2013	336,431	123,106	326,227	184,988	970,752
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2012	287,037	89,343	302,484	85,290	764,154
Charged in year	36,467	1,941	4,443	5,221	48,072
Disposals	(87,342)	0	0	0	(87,342)
Revaluations	33,460	438	5,345	1,468	40,711
At 31 March 2013	269,622	91,722	312,272	91,979	765,595
Carrying amount at 31 March 2013	66,809	31,384	13,955	93,009	205,157
Carrying amount at 31 March 2012	72,048	2,686	18,159	14,678	107,571
Asset Financing					
Owned	66,809	31,384	13,955	93,009	205,157
Finance lease	0	0	0	0	0
On-balance sheet	0	0	0	0	0
Carrying amount at 31 March 2013	66,809	31,384	13,955	93,009	205,157

Plant and equipment are revalued annually by reference to the indices issued by the Office for National Statistics for the different types of assets.

2011-12

	Information Technology £	Office Equipment £	Furniture £	Fixtures & Fittings £	Total £
Cost/Valuation					
At 1 April 2011	389,394	101,182	333,111	97,457	921,144
Additions	61,880	744	720	1,207	64,551
Disposals	(91,546)	(11,420)	(15,614)	0	(118,580)
Revaluations	(643)	1,523	2,426	1,304	4,610
At 31 March 2012	359,085	92,029	320,643	99,968	871,725
Depreciation					
At 1 April 2011	340,279	97,055	311,336	79,846	828,516
Charged in year	38,892	2,206	4,449	4,604	50,151
Disposals	(91,546)	(11,420)	(15,614)	0	(118,580)
Revaluations	(588)	1,502	2,313	840	4,067
At 31 March 2012	287,037	89,343	302,484	85,290	764,154
Carrying amount at 31 March 2012	72,048	2,686	18,159	14,678	107,571
Carrying amount at 31 March 2011	49,115	4,127	21,775	17,611	92,628
Asset Financing					
Owned	72,048	2,686	18,159	14,678	107,571
Finance lease	0	0	0	0	0
Contracts	0	0	0	0	0
Carrying amount at 31 March 2012	72,048	2,686	18,159	14,678	107,571

Plant and equipment are revalued annually by reference to the indices issued by the Office for National Statistics for the different types of assets.

7. Intangible assets

Intangible assets comprise software and licenses.

2012-13

	Information Technology	Software Licences	Total
Cost or Valuation			
At 1 April 2012	12,979	71,121	84,100
Additions	5,883	9,699	15,582
Disposals	0	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 March 2013	18,862	80,820	99,682
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2012	9,940	42,729	52,669
Charged in year	1,722	15,367	17,089
Disposals	0	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 March 2013	11,662	58,096	69,758
Carrying amount at 31 March 2013	7,200	22,724	29,924
Carrying amount at 31 March 2012	3,039	28,392	31,431
Asset financing:			
Owned	0	0	0
Finance Leased	0	0	0
Contracts	7,200	22,724	29,924
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2013	7,200	22,724	29,924

2011-12

	Information Technology	Software Licences	Total
Cost or Valuation			
At 1 April 2011	22,582	61,222	83,804
Additions	0	24,221	24,221
Donations	0	0	0
Disposals	(9,603)	(14,322)	(23,925)
Impairments	0	0	0
Reclassifications	0	0	0
Revaluations	0	0	0
At 31 March 2012	12,979	71,121	84,100
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2011	18,023	42,297	60,320
Charged in year	1,520	14,754	16,274
Donations	0	0	0
Disposals	(9,603)	(14,322)	(23,925)
Impairments	0	0	0
Reclassifications	0	0	0
Revaluations	0	0	0
At 31 March 2012	9,940	42,729	52,669
Carrying amount at 31 March 2011	4,559	18,925	23,484
Carrying amount at 31 March 2012	3,039	28,392	31,431
Asset financing:			
Owned	3,039	0	3,039
Finance Leased Contracts	0	0	0
	0	28,392	28,392
Carrying amount at 31 March 2012	3,039	28,392	31,431

8. Financial Instruments

As the cash requirements of the Equality Commission are met through Grant-in-Aid provided by the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk that would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the Commission's expected purchase and usage requirements and the Commission is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

9. Trade receivables and other current assets

	2012-13 £	2011-12 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Prepayments	81,880	82,432
Accrued Income	55,890	74,994
Other Receivables	300	5,069
	138,070	162,495

9.1 Intra-Government Balances - Receivables

	Amounts falling due within one year		Amounts falling due after more than one year	
	2012-13 £	2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2011-12 £
Balances with other central government bodies	55,890	80,063	0	0
Balances with bodies external to government	82,180	82,432	0	0
Total receivables at 31 March 2013	138,070	162,495	0	0

10. Cash and cash equivalents

	2012-13 £	2011-12 £
Balance at 1 April 2012	125,362	80,981
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	(125,256)	44,381
Balance at 31 March 2013	106	125,362

11. Trade payables and other current liabilities

	2012-13 £	2011-12 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Accruals and deferred Income	289,503	194,350
	<hr/> 289,503	<hr/> 194,350

11.1 Intra-Government Balances - Payables

	Amounts falling due within one year		Amounts falling due after more than one year	
	2012-13	2011-12	2012-13	2011-12
Balances with other central government bodies	11,778	12,740	0	0
Balances with bodies external to government	277,725	181,610	0	0
Total payables at 31 March 2013	<hr/> 289,503	<hr/> 194,350	<hr/> 0	<hr/> 0

12. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2012-13		2011-12	
	Severance Costs	Legal Costs	Severance Costs	Legal Costs
	£	£	£	£
Balance at 1 April 2012	245,000	105,159	0	128,520
Provided in the year	5,000	383,224	245,000	389,808
Provisions not required written back	0	(121,997)	0	(93,531)
Provisions utilised in the year	0	(283,326)	0	(319,638)
Balance at 31 March 2013	250,000	83,060	245,000	105,159

The Commission makes provision for expenditure authorised for legal assistance before it is committed to an external provider. A provision of £250,000 has also been made in respect of potential exit packages necessary in the coming year.

13. Capital commitments

	2012-13 £	2011-12 £
Contracted capital commitments at 31 March 2013 not otherwise included in these financial statements		
Plant and equipment	22,000	0
Intangible assets	0	0
	22,000	0

14. Commitments under leases

14.1 Operating leases

Total future minimum lease payments under operating leases are given in the table below for each of the following periods.

Obligations under operating leases comprises:

	2012-13 £	2011-12 £
Buildings		
Not later than one year	336,000	336,000
Later than one year and not later than five years	1,344,000	1,344,000
Later than five years	1,120,230	1,428,000
Other:		
Not later than one year	4,426	12,845
Later than one year and not later than five years	7,291	19,622
Later than five years	0	36,792

14.2 Finance Leases

The Commission had no commitments under finance leases

15. Other financial commitments

The Commission had no other financial commitments at 31 March 2013.

16. Contingent liabilities disclosed under IAS 37

The Commission has no known contingent liabilities.

17. Losses and special payments

There were no losses or special payments made in the year or in the previous year.

18. Related-party transactions

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). OFMDFM is regarded as a related party.

In addition, the Commission has had related transactions with other central government bodies.

During the year the Commission had various material transactions with;

- OFMDFM
(£6,207,669 of which £Nil was outstanding at the year end),
- the Northern Ireland Commission for Children and Young People (£137,213 of which £2,000 was outstanding at the year end),

- the Commission for Victims and Survivors (£11,732 of which £Nil was outstanding at the year end),
- the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (£11,817 of which £Nil was outstanding at the year end),
- the Commission for Older People Northern Ireland (£189,491 of which £53,890 was outstanding at the year end),
- the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission (£700 of which £Nil was outstanding at the year end) and
- the Victims and Survivors Service for Northern Ireland (£7,669 of which £Nil was outstanding at the year end)

No Commissioner or key management executive has undertaken any material transactions with the Equality Commission during the year.

There were no other related party transactions.

19. Third-party assets

The Commission has no third-party assets.

20. Events after the Reporting Period

There were no events after the reporting period impacting on these statements and the accounts are authorised for issue from the date the C & AG signs his audit report.

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

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