

Strategic Plan 2016-19

(Draft v0.9)

Vision:

'A dynamic and well governed charities sector in which the public has confidence, underpinned by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's effective delivery of its regulatory role.'

Purpose:

'to register, regulate and report on the charity sector in Northern Ireland.'

Values:

*'Independent, Accountable, Proportionate, Impartial,
Transparent, Consistent, Respectful.'*

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Foreword

This is the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's first three-year strategic planning process since charity registration opened in late 2013. There are now over 4,000 charities on the public register with a range of charitable purposes intended to deliver public benefit in Northern Ireland. The Commission estimates there are at least the same number yet to be registered.

The plan covers the three years from 2016 to 2019, and sets out our vision and purpose. It identifies the services we intend to provide and the outcomes we hope to achieve.

Our core purpose is to register, regulate and report on the charity sector in Northern Ireland. The Commission is independent in its decision making, acting without fear or favour, in the public interest. Over the next three years, resources permitting, the Commission will focus on building a culture of compliance within the charity sector and registering all remaining deemed organisations. Towards the end of this period we aim to create a further long term registration strategy and move to steady state with compliance processes.

The Commission's current source of income is 100% 'Grant in Aid' from central government. Within the overall allocation of £1.7 million for 2016/17, the Commission is facing a freeze in its resource budget. This level of spend equates to approximately £1 per person in Northern Ireland.

A freeze in resource levels was confirmed for year one of the plan. 2017-19 is based on an extrapolation of current available resourcing, although this is yet to be confirmed. This poses serious risks to the Commission as an effective regulator. With further powers being enacted, significant changes in ways of working are planned to enable a compliance monitoring programme of any significance to be launched. Depending on availability of resources, certain areas and levels of activity will be affected, but the Commission intends to remain a proportionate and effective regulator.

Finally, the Commission would like to acknowledge the input of various stakeholders to the formulation of the plan through the consultation process. The assistance of our sponsor department is also appreciated, in particular, its Staff Resource Unit which undertook a capacity review to assess resourcing needs. We note the assessment that Commission staff are already operating at a very high level of efficiency. As CCNI takes on new functions, staff flexibility and change management will form part of the development of the organisation's culture.



Tom McGrath CBE
Chief Commissioner



Frances McCandless
Chief Executive

Executive summary

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland is the independent regulator of Northern Ireland charities, as created by the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, the "Act". The Commission has five statutory objectives under the Act relating to public trust and confidence in charities, operation of the public benefit requirement, compliance by charity trustees, effective use of charitable resources, and enhancing accountability of charities.

At the start of this strategic plan there are over 4,000 charities on the public register with a range of charitable purposes intended to deliver public benefit in Northern Ireland. The Commission has identified four strategic themes for the next three years which will deliver its wider statutory remit, the primary objective of which is increasing public trust and confidence in charities.

Our strategic aims and priorities for 2016 – 19 are:

- 1 developing compliance regarding the use of charitable resources;
- 2 progressing charity registration to enhance accountability;
- 3 demonstrating the public benefit arising from charitable giving and activities; and
- 4 developing as a properly governed, transparent and independent decision making body.

Over the next three years, resources permitting, the Commission will focus on:

- 2016/17: building understanding of compliance, and registering all remaining deemed organisations;
- 2017/18 embedding a culture of compliance monitoring in the charity sector, and dealing with organisations that have failed to register; and
- 2018/19 creating a further long-term registration strategy and moving to steady state with compliance processes.

The Commission's income is 100% Grant in Aid from central government. An allocation of £1.7 million has been made for 2016/17 - in effect a resource budget freeze. 2017-19 budget projections are based on an extrapolation of current available resourcing, although this is yet to be confirmed. This presents real challenges for the Commission in attempting to meet public expectations of monitoring thousands of charities each year. Our aim is to create a robust culture of compliance in the early years of annual reporting to enable us to move to a more targeted approach in future years. However, in order to do this, we will have to remove resources from registration, casework and investigations, which will impact on the amount of work in these areas and the time which cases will take.

The three-year strategic plan will be supplemented by annual business plans detailing actions, milestones and measures to achieve the overall strategic themes.

Each year the Commission will expand the range of charity sector information it publishes with the aim of creating greater transparency and accountability to meet the Commission's primary objective of increasing public trust and confidence in charities.

Introduction – About Us

- 1.1 The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's purpose is to register, regulate and report on the charity sector in Northern Ireland. At the start of this strategic plan there are over 4,000 charities on the public register with a range of charitable purposes intended to deliver public benefit in Northern Ireland.
- 1.2 The Commission is a non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), established by Royal Assent to deliver the statutory provisions of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, the "Act". We are sponsored by the Department for Communities (DfD), with a board of seven Commissioners who were appointed by the Minister for Social Development (DSD).
- 1.3 As an NDPB the Commission is independent in its decision making, acting without fear or favour, in the public interest. Various decisions of the Commission are appealable to the Charity Tribunal or the Courts. The Commission welcomes the opportunity to test and clarify charity law as opportunities arise.
- 1.4 The Commission has five statutory objectives under the Act:
 1. *to increase public trust and confidence in charities.*
 2. *to promote awareness and understanding of the operation of the public benefit requirement.*
 3. *to promote compliance by charity trustees with their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the administration of their charities.*
 4. *to promote the effective use of charitable resources.*
 5. *to enhance the accountability of charities to donors, beneficiaries and the general public.*

2. Commission Vision, Purpose and Values

- 2.1 The Commission's Vision is:

'A dynamic and well governed charities sector in which the public has confidence, underpinned by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's effective delivery of its regulatory role.'
- 2.2 Our Purpose is:

'to register, regulate and report on the charity sector in Northern Ireland.'
- 2.3 The Commission works with its various stakeholders and provides services which reflect our Corporate Values of being:

'Independent, Accountable, Proportionate, Impartial, Transparent, Consistent, Respectful.'

3. Context in which the Commission operates

- 3.1 The period covered by this plan will be challenging for the Commission and the charity sector it regulates. A number of strategic issues will impact on Commission practices in the next three to five years.

Strategic Issues and factors

- 3.2 **Political change** – The future legislative and policy agenda for charity regulation will not be known until a Programme for Government is agreed by the new Executive following the Northern Ireland Assembly elections in May 2016. Also at that time nine new Stormont departments will replace the current 12. The new Department for Communities (DfC) will have over 20 sponsor bodies, including the Commission. Its governance framework may include new arm's length supervisory arrangements requiring Commission resources to deliver accountability and reporting.
- 3.3 **Legislative** – The recent commencement of The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 also brings into operation 'religious designation' under Section 165 of the Act. This will add a further aspect to the Commission's registration workload but more significantly herald a sea change towards focusing on compliance monitoring. This period will also see the introduction of Section 167 of the Act, mandating regulation of charities registered in other jurisdictions but operating in Northern Ireland. The Commission will face significant pressures to develop further working procedures and realign activities to ensure its statutory remit is delivered as effectively as possible with the resources made available by DfC.
- 3.4 **Economic** – the plan will be implemented against the backdrop of major changes in the finances of government in Northern Ireland. Following the Treasury's November 2015 Comprehensive Spending Review the Executive's 2015/16 budget position reflects significant budgetary pressures including a reduction of 5.7% applied to non-protected departmental baselines. This plan outlines the approach the Commission intends to adopt to carry out our purpose and deliver an increased statutory remit. It is based on sponsor department providing resource funding of £1.7 million in 2016/17, reflecting a freeze from 2015/16, and an extrapolation of current available resourcing, although this is yet to be confirmed. Over the past three years the Commission has received in-year bids which had a significant impact. Without these the Commission would have struggled to meet emerging needs. Further bids are likely to be necessary in coming years.
- 3.5 **Social** – Since the economic downturn the charity sector has faced declining funding while demand for services has been increasing and the communities served have grown more diverse. This presents challenges for maintaining governance while doing more with less. The overall level of charitable giving is expected to decline and traditional means of fundraising are being questioned in the media. A range of new charities may emerge in response to population needs. As other regulators have found there are governance risks when providing local and overseas aid

relief in response to global population movements. The Commission will have to work to communicate key messages and guidance to ensure Trustees are aware of their responsibilities and can operate effectively and within the law.

- 3.6 **Technological** – software developments are changing the way charities operate and how they can be regulated. The Commission’s Information Communication and Technology (ICT) Strategy commits to develop, operate and streamline the services needed to support the functions of the Commission. While the Commission operates on the Northern Ireland Civil Service network, it also ‘piggy backs’ systems operated by the Charity Commission for England & Wales (CCEW). The Commission will have to be successful in bidding for capital resourcing to enable it to follow CCEW’s strategic ICT development agenda, which aims to increase online services delivered to charities and the public. Without an effective on line register the Commission and registered charities will not be able to deliver the accountability and public scrutiny intended by the Assembly.
- 3.7 **Environmental** – The new Programme for Government is likely to set some challenging targets for the public sector in terms of reducing environmental impact. At the start of this plan the Commission will have in place a new Environmental Management Strategy and this will provide a means for the Commission to play a part in addressing any whole of government targets through its operations, albeit some additional work may be needed to meet any new targets and additional objectives.
- 3.8 **Capacity** - To inform this strategic plan a capacity review was undertaken by DSD Staff Resource Unit (SRU), involving an objective assessment of the inputs required to deliver a range of key regulatory processes. SRU concluded, using standard approved methods and HM Treasury benchmarks, that Commission staff were already operating at a very high level of efficiency. While maintaining registration and enquiry teams at steady state levels as envisaged under DSD’s previous Light Touch Review, the Commission identified resourcing needs to establish and deliver a broad compliance regime based on SRU’s work. An initial annual budget increase of £225k per annum to frontload compliance monitoring was requested by the Board. This would have enabled 100% basic compliance checking and an increased number of all other checks in the earliest days of the new compliance regime.

The request for resources to frontload compliance monitoring was not granted. Therefore, reallocation of internal resources has been brought forward. We aim to carry out in the region of 958 basic compliance checks (100% of those received) , 27 failure to apply cases, make decisions on 1,055 registration applications and progress 80 enquiries in the first year of this plan. This leaves limited capacity to review zero-tolerance and high risk cases, or to commence inquiries into default cases, undertake internal compliance referrals or monitoring visits. This is not sustainable and the Commission will reduce service levels in other areas and re-allocate resources further to provide a minimum level of compliance assurance from 2017.

Risk Framework for 2016/19

- 3.9 The Commission's corporate governance framework reflects a range of risks that the organisation will, in all probability, have to manage while implementing this strategic plan. These include:
- Severe pressure on resource allocation within the new sponsor department is very likely to mean resourcing levels that will impact on capacity to carry out statutory activities and ability to act as an effective regulator of the charity sector.
 - Registration processes take longer than envisaged (due to time taken by charities to respond, higher numbers of incomplete or difficult applications), diversion of resources to compliance, thus requiring resources for a longer period of time.
 - Resourcing of registration 'chase cycle' work is reduced eg unco-operative trustees/organisations who fail to apply or dispute the need to apply, affecting achievement of statutory objectives and damaging public confidence in the regulator.
 - Building the charity register will become challenging as tranches of deemed organisations are exhausted and other organisations do not come forward, requiring expanded communications work to reach these 'hard to reach' groups and networking with statutory and other funding bodies to develop lists of other organisations that should be applying to register with the Commission.
 - New functions arising from recent commencement of parts of the Act will require resourcing eg accounting and reporting regulations, and Section 165 (religious designation). S167 (charities already registered with another regulator and operating in Northern Ireland) will need to be commenced towards the end of 2018/19, requiring resourcing to establish new processes and operate them going forward.
 - Poor quality annual monitoring returns, and volunteers increasingly reluctant to become/continue as trustees once they understand their full responsibilities, will require additional work with helper groups and communications work to address any shortfalls and sectoral weaknesses that emerge.
 - Regulation of charities in Northern Ireland is largely untested through the courts and minimal case law is available so novel and contentious issues are likely to involve the Commission in Tribunal and/or Court cases which will require staff and other resourcing.
 - Impact of Charity Tribunal challenges and decisions on CCNI's practices, guidance, resources and reputation will involve time and effort.
 - Concerns over fundraising methods of charities have led to increased reputational risks for the charity sector, government reviews and changes in the self-regulatory framework. Legislative developments in England and Wales resulting from the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act may impact on resources, practices and procedures in charities and for regulators. Any follow up legislative programmes will vary in nature and timing across the devolved administrations within the UK, with any lag providing the opportunity for unregulated poor practice to continue in Northern Ireland.

- As CCNI takes on new functions and develops towards steady state in 2019-20, staff flexibility and change management will need to form part of development of the organisation's culture.
- Changes in the strategic agenda amongst key partners and suppliers eg CCEW, HMRC, will present risks to operating systems and the regulatory work they support. If the strategic process of 'piggy backing' other charity regulators is to continue, resourcing will be required so that on-line customer services can be enhanced and efficiency savings realised.
- Increased political, media and individuals' interest in CCNI work will require staff time and resourcing to respond and deal with information requests and complaints, placing pressure on time available to deliver customer services.

Review of 2015/16 performance

- 3.10 In 2015/16 the Commission achieved 80% of corporate key performance indicator targets. In light of uncertainty about sponsor department's level of resourcing going forward the Board decided in quarter 3 to miss targets concerning calling forward charities to register, and the related applications received. The resource budget spend target was missed by a small amount in light of under spends around programme activities, including delays and withdrawal of legal work in Quarter 4.
- 3.11 At year end 94% of actions and measurements related to specific objectives in the business plan were completed on target. Five actions and measures were not achieved. These include developing external guidance on Interim Manager Processes, delayed in light of prioritising Tribunal and court work which continued through the year. The Commission was not able to undertake preliminary work on implementation of S167 regulations with DSD in light of the department's prioritisation of its Annual Accounting and Reporting Regulations. The Board's decision to miss two targets related to registration impacted on related business plan actions. Plans to avail of an integrated on-line portal with CCEW and HMRC were missed as this project encountered slippages which were beyond the Commission's control. In light of the lack of planned progress on these issues the overall business plan target of achieving 100% targets and measures was not met.

4. Strategic Themes and Key Performance Indicators for 2016-19

4.1 In developing this plan the Commission considered the knowledge built up within the organisation since it became operational in April 2010, reports on the operation of fellow Charity regulators and lessons learnt, and feedback from a range of stakeholders including their views and expectations obtained through consultation.

4.2 The Commission will face a number of budget pressures during the period of this plan. Accordingly we have prioritised our roles and believe registration, compliance monitoring and investigation of concerns are essential. All other activities are categorised as desirable and depend on availability of resources. This may lead to negative impacts such as: the registration programme being slowed and taking longer; work on the development of advice and research delayed; and availability of staff time to respond to callers and general emails restricted to core business hours.

4.3 The plan's structure is a departure from the previous framework. It now focuses on four themes which for the period of this plan are:

- 1 developing compliance regarding the use of charitable resources;
- 2 progressing charity registration to enhance accountability;
- 3 demonstrating the public benefit arising from charitable giving and activities; and
- 4 developing as a properly governed, transparent and independent decision making body.

4.4 Our key strategic successes over the next three years will be:

External

- completing work on calling all organisations on the deemed list forward to register;
- implementing a strategy to deal with those who fail to register;
- developing a strategy to work with governing bodies and funders to identify those organisations that are not yet, but should be, registered in future years;
- establishing compliance monitoring processes and creating a culture of timely and reliable annual reporting by charities;
- demonstrating better governance and management in the administration of specific charities following regulatory action and reporting;
- providing open data to help empower members of the public to become involved in monitoring charity annual reports and identifying concerns;
- seeing funders increasingly consider and/or act on our information; and

Internal

- receiving satisfactory audit reports;
- consistently meeting customer charter standards;
- demonstrating outcomes in promoting equality of opportunity and good relations.

- developing more flexible and skilled staff team; and
- achieving Investor in People status.

4.5 The Commission plans to achieve the following key performance results over the next three years:

2016-17

- continue to build the charity register by processing 1,055 cases to closure by year end (based on an assumption of receiving the requisite number of complete applications);
- process 60% of registration applications to decision within 4 months of receiving a 'complete' application;
- implement a compliance monitoring programme involving basic compliance check of 958 annual returns (based on an assumption of 100% submission rate and two core staff plus some reallocations); and
- process 60% of self regulatory and regulatory enquiries to closure within 4 months of full risk assessment.

2017-18

- continue to build the charity register by processing 576 cases to closure by year end (based on an assumption of receiving the requisite number of complete applications);
- process 60% of registration applications to decision within 4 months of receiving a 'complete' application;
- implement a compliance monitoring programme involving a basic compliance check of 912 Annual Monitoring Returns (based on an assumption of 65% submission rate and using two core staff plus some reallocations)); and
- process 60% of self regulatory and regulatory enquiries to closure within 4 months of full risk assessment.

2018-19

- continue to build the charity register by processing 576 cases to closure by year end (based on an assumption of receiving the requisite number of complete applications);
- process 60% of registration applications to decision within 4 months of receiving a 'complete' application;
- implement a compliance monitoring programme involving basic compliance check of 1,515 Annual Monitoring Returns due (based on an assumption of 75% submission rate and using two core staff plus some reallocations)); and
- process 60% of self regulatory and regulatory enquiries to closure within 4 months of full risk assessment.

4.6 The strategic themes are set in the following section along with criteria against which performance will be measured.

5. Delivery and Measures of Success

5.1 This strategic plan will be put into effect through a series of annual business plans. Each business plan will include details of actions needed, key milestones and performance measures to underpin the strategic themes and priorities. The table below includes details of priority actions for each strategic theme along with detail of what success will look like and how we will measure that success. A variety of quantitative and qualitative performance measures will be included in annual business plans. Results will be reported through annual and research reports.

Strategic Aim 1 - Developing compliance regarding the use of charitable resources	What success would look like	How will we measure success
<p>Priority - we will support compliance by charity trustees with their legal obligations and address non compliance by:</p> <p>a) developing a positive regulatory framework based on accounting and reporting regulations being put into effect by Government from 2016.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all registered charities submit annual monitoring return (incl accounts) on line within 10 months of their year end. • annually complaints about charity accounts as a proportion of the number published reduces 	<p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures</p>
<p>b) using compliance and enforcement powers to take proportionate and robust action to protect NI's charities from mismanagement and abuse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we focus on charities that involve actual regulatory challenges and carry out effective enquiries • we get good audit assurance on our compliance processes. • positive feedback from charities on changes arising from regulatory action. 	<p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures</p> <p>Ad hoc charity feedback surveys</p>
<p>c) verifying that trustees have properly discharged their legal obligations in terms of closed charities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People tell us our guidance is easy to understand and useful • We act promptly when notified of closures. 	<p>Online charity feedback surveys</p> <p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By the end of this plan there will be no pre-registration closures. 	milestones and measures
d) acting robustly when charities do not respond to regulatory requirements, or whenever there is doubt about information provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely action will be taken against charity Trustees and/or Officers, and the risk level shared with HMRC, funders and the public. action taken on occasions false information is submitted. 	<p>Publication of thematic reports.</p> <p>Publication of irregular activity within charities.</p>
e) working closely with other government agencies and funders dealing with charities to become the primary hub for identifying risks, lessons learnt and charity regulatory data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funders act on our information We share and receive smart and relevant information. 	<p>Publication of reports on risk patterns and trends.</p> <p>Report from Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering.</p>

Strategic Aim 2 - Progressing charity registration to enhance accountability.	What success would look like	How will we measure success
<p>Priority - We will increase charity transparency and public trust and confidence through progressing the definitive public list of Northern Ireland charities by:</p> <p>a) Operating an efficient and accessible registration process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We complete work on calling all organisations on the deemed list forward to register and process all complete applications arising. We meet our decision making turnaround times. 	<p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures.</p>
b) providing accurate and timely information about charities freely available and accessible globally through the internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charities and the public make more use of online information. 	<p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures.</p>
c) publishing information from charities and statutory decisions the Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All charities keep their details complete and up to date. 	<p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan</p>

has made about them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web pages reflect the entire regulatory history of each charity on the register. 	milestones and measures.
d) identifying and taking action against those who have failed to register.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders and the public routinely identify those who have not registered • Successful legal outcome against those who failed to apply. 	<p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures</p> <p>Annual report will detail outcome of legal work.</p>
e) giving information about purposes or financial or regulatory concerns that enlightens the public and donors when making decisions about whether or not to support specific charities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charities and donors use the register and have confidence in it. • A fully populated and actively searched register. 	<p>Regular survey feedback.</p> <p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures.</p>

Strategic Aim 3 - Demonstrating the public benefit arising from charitable giving and activities.	What success would look like	How will we measure success
<p>Priority - We will encourage the public to play a key role in holding registered charities accountable by:</p> <p>a) developing public awareness of what charity regulation means and the operation of public benefit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All charities report on public benefit. • Public informed about how to understand public benefit statements and reports. 	<p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures.</p>
<p>b) providing a resource where the public can raise concerns about charities and/or obtain guidance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance is reflected in more relevant and actionable concerns. • Regularly receive concerns from the public about failure to provide public benefit. 	<p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures.</p>
<p>c) undertaking a programme of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of best practice case 	<p>Publication of research reports as per</p>

research, including identifying best practice.	<p>studies published annually.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charities produce Annual Public Benefit statements that demonstrate best practice which the public understand. 	<p>the relevant business plan milestones and measures.</p> <p>Annual survey feedback.</p>
d) publishing a range of open data and research reports reflecting the size, diversity, operations and funding of the charity sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a report detailing the scale and nature of the sector. Increase in demand for Commission information. 	<p>Publication of annual charity sector report.</p> <p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures.</p>
e) working with umbrella bodies dealing with charities to develop strategies to widen the opportunities for others to hold registered charities accountable, while retaining our independence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have more effective relationships with helper organisations that guide charities. 	<p>Annual stakeholder survey.</p> <p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures.</p>

Strategic Aim 4 - Developing as a properly governed, transparent and independent decision making body.	What success would look like	How will we measure success
<p>Priority - We will manage our business and deliver services to our customers in an efficient and effective way while promoting a positive internal organisational culture by:</p> <p>a) maintaining a focus on organisational governance, culture and values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoiding qualified accounts. Operating within the terms of the MSFM. High staff engagement levels. Achieve Investor in People status. 	<p>Publish Audit opinions.</p> <p>People Strategy Implementation.</p> <p>Staff survey.</p>

<p>b) reporting reliable information on performance against targets and standards, and on the use of all available statutory powers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMART performance information is routinely provided inside and outside the organisation and effectively scrutinised. • Effective regulator in the eyes of the public. 	<p>Publish performance information as per the relevant business plan milestones and measures.</p> <p>Publish Audit opinion on assurance mechanisms.</p>
<p>c) developing the capacity to manage change effectively and identify ongoing improvements to systems and processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • culture of the organisation reflects flexibility and focus on ongoing development. 	<p>Publish performance information in annual reports.</p>
<p>d) monitoring and responding to customer needs and satisfaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer charter standards are consistently delivered. 	<p>Ad hoc customer surveys, monitoring of complaints and customer charter service standards</p>
<p>e) having a commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and good relations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering the action plan • 5 year scheme review identifies positive outcomes • Diverse workforce which feels respected and valued. 	<p>Annual Review of scheme implementation</p> <p>Staff survey.</p>

6. Resources

6.1 The Commission's current source of income is 100% 'Grant in Aid' from the Sponsor Department. The Department is operating against the resource constraints set out in section 3.4. In preparing this strategic plan the Commission was asked to consider a number of budget scenarios in the first year of the plan, with a freeze in resource levels over the remainder. The Commission considered scenarios ranging from an increase of +/-15% in year. It was calculated reductions of -10 to -15% in resource budget involved cuts in service delivery and the loss of between one to three posts. The Commission has been allocated £1.7million for 2016/16, in effect a resource budget freeze.

	2015/16 Baseline	2015/16 Actual	2016/17 Year 1	2017/18 Year 2	2018/19 Year 3
Resource Budget (Baseline remains unchanged)	£1,591,331	£1,769,331	£1,591,331	£1,591,331	£1,591,331
Capital Budget	£40,000	£90,000	£100,000	£50,000	£50,000
Total	1,634,331	1,859,331	£1,691,331	£1,641,331	£1,641,331

Budgeting Assumptions

6.2 The baseline budget remains unchanged over 3 years. This will require significant changes in ways of working so a new compliance monitoring programme of any significance can be launched. With this level of resourcing managing the Commission's activities to deliver across its statutory remit will be challenging and it is anticipated in year bids will have to be made. Real pressures will exist from 2017/18 on the in-year training budget and programme work, with drastic reductions in resource allocated to dealing with customers e.g. advice calls/emails, research and communications. It is also assumed a number of commencement orders yet to be enacted to bring into effect remaining parts of the Act may not be commenced. The Commission will submit a business case associated with any planned commencements to the Department to ensure consideration of necessary resourcing and training. It is assumed the NICS 2016/17 pay settlement will be a 1% increase, and continue for a further two years. Detailed budget assumptions are set out as follows;

Commissioner costs	There will be no provision for annual increase in Commissioners or related costs.
Staff Remuneration	25 staff (Light Touch Review full compliment) over 3 years. 2016-17 seconded staff (casework) to November 2016. 2016-19 no additional staff for Compliance Monitoring work but redeployment to undertake compliance work of 1 Casework Officer and 1 Enquiries Support Officer, and 0.5 Corporate Services resources redeployed from registration support work.
Staff/Commissioners non-remuneration costs	Migration to HR connect assumed. Training budget to reflect investment for temporary staff and all staff to provide compliance monitoring capacity to deal with peaks around bottlenecks.
IT costs	ICT budget decreased reflecting reduced CCEW and IT Assist hosting charges.
Facilities/Premises costs	Sizeable increase in rent and rates costs anticipated. The sponsor department's lease for Loughview expires Sept 2016. Possible medium term extension may be put in place at increased rental cost or CCNI may be re located to different premises in light of NICS estate efficiency programme.
General running costs	Stationery and postage decreasing to reflect emphasis on electronic communications and telecoms decreasing to reflect expected increase in IT Assist costs not being incurred.
Programme Costs (excl legal and professional costs)	Legal spend reduced to £110.5k compared to £161k in 2015/16. No change to investigation and interviewee costs.
Legal and professional costs	In year 1 assume spend for legal cases begun in previous year or legal opinion for ongoing advice (retained Counsel), Investigation Tribunal cases, Casework Tribunal cases, High Court appeal following on from Tribunal actions, forensic accountancy support for major investigations, first use of powers in Act, research strategy.

Staff

6.3 The Commission's largest area of expenditure is on staffing, with approx £1,130k being spent in 2015/16 on permanent, seconded and temporary staff. During this plan it is anticipated the staff compliment will remain at 25 posts, although the overall pay bill will decline with the return of four secondees to DfC from November 2016. No change is anticipated in the overall staff structure which is made up of Charity Services, Compliance and Enquiries, and Corporate Services.

7. Equality Impact

7.1 Under our approved integrated equality scheme the Commission is committed to delivering scheme commitments. During the lifetime of this plan the scheme will be reviewed. A report on the outcome of the five year review will be submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and published on our website.