

# BUSINESS PLAN 2007–08



NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

April 2007  
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It is also available on the Commission's website at [www.nihrc.org](http://www.nihrc.org).

## INTRODUCTION

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission was established as a result of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement 1998 and has been in operation since 1 March 1999, under the governing legislation, the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It is a Non-Departmental Public Body funded by government through the Northern Ireland Office and reporting to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

The Commission operates independently of government through a Commission comprising one full-time Chief Commissioner and nine part-time Commissioners. The Commission has a staffing complement of 21 full time equivalent staff and a budget of £1.561 million for 2007-08, which is funded by grant-in-aid from Parliament through the Northern Ireland Office. The Commission's organisation chart is at Appendix 1; the names of Commissioners and staff in post from April 2007 are listed in Appendices 2 and 3 respectively.

The primary functions of the Commission are to protect and promote the human rights of everyone in Northern Ireland. It does this by litigation, conducting investigations, education, promotion and advising government. A major area of work concerns providing advice to the government on rights that might be contained in a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland – progress on this is closely linked to the work of the Bill of Rights Forum of political parties and representatives of civil society, established by government in December 2006 to discuss the content of a Bill of Rights, which will inform the Commission's own advice on this matter.

Details of the Commission's current statutory powers and duties are listed in Appendix 4. It is anticipated that the Commission's powers will be changed during the period covered by this Business Plan. Draft legislation – the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Bill – is currently progressing through Parliament. Once enacted, this legislation is expected to enhance the powers of the Commission, particularly in respect of its powers of investigation, to allow the Commission access to places of detention and give it the power to compel the production of documents. There are also several important administrative functions which require amendment in order to ensure that the Commission can operate with the independence recommended by the United Nations 'Paris Principles' guidance of 1993 on the status and role of national human rights institutions. These changes are the subject of ongoing discussions with the Northern Ireland Office.

The Commission's Strategic Plan covering the period 2006-09 provides the framework for this Business Plan. This Business Plan operationalises the second year of the Strategic Plan.

In respect of changes to the external environment in which the Commission operates, the return of a devolved Assembly may have a significant impact on the work of the Commission in terms of responding to greater volumes of consultations on new policy and legislative initiatives, representative work with Assembly committees and interaction with MLAs, and, in the event of the devolution of policing and criminal justice, working through the implications and implementation of such a change. The Commission has anticipated the return of a devolved administration by bolstering its staffing in the key areas of policy development and press and public affairs, although further changes in the organisation of staffing may be required in the light of working with the new Assembly.

Elsewhere, the Commission anticipates developing co-operative relationships with the Commission on Equality and Human Rights in Great Britain, and the Scottish Human Rights Commission, both of which are expected to become operational in October 2007. The Commission is also conscious of its own particular contribution among the various regulatory and oversight bodies that co-exist in Northern Ireland.

Additional funding has been sought by the Northern Ireland and Irish Human Rights Commissions from the respective governments for discrete resources for the Joint Commission for an expanded programme of work. Without this funding, the work outlined under Aim 2, Objective 10 will be curtailed.

At the international level, the Commission has recently been fully accredited as a national human rights institution at the United Nations, giving it access to the recently established Human Rights Council at the United Nations. The Commission anticipates continuing to play an active role in the various human rights networks of the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Monitoring the United Kingdom's compliance with international human rights treaties to which it is signatory will continue to be a focus of our work, together with monitoring compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights domestically, through the implementation of the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Commission commends this Plan to its many stakeholders and welcomes views on its work at any time.

**Paddy Sloan**  
**Chief Executive**  
**March 2007**

## **VISION**

Our vision is to help bring about a society in Northern Ireland where everyone is aware of their internationally recognised human rights and those of others and can enjoy those rights in a society which respects diversity and in which they can feel safe and valued.

## **MISSION**

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission will work vigorously and independently to ensure that the human rights of everyone in Northern Ireland are fully and firmly protected in law, policy and practice. To that end, the Commission will measure the law, policy and practice in Northern Ireland against internationally accepted rules and principles for the protection of human rights and will exercise to the full the functions conferred upon it to ensure that those rules and principles are promoted, adopted and applied throughout Northern Ireland.

## VALUES

**The Commission is committed to working in accordance with the following key values:**

**Independence:** The Commission is completely independent from any outside influence. We arrive at our conclusions after all the evidence has been fully considered.

**Fairness:** We provide a proper hearing to any person or group wanting to meet with us. We are objective when assessing evidence, and use internationally accepted rules and principles on human rights as our baseline at all times.

**Openness:** We welcome visitors to the Commission's offices and undertake to meet individuals and groups at other premises if this is more convenient or suitable. The minutes of Commission meetings and all key documents are published on our website.

**Accessibility:** The Commission works closely with members of the public. We ensure that all our public events are accessible and our publications are as easy to understand as possible and made available in other formats.

**Accountability:** We produce an annual report after the end of each financial year. We are answerable to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the UK Ombudsman) and we will co-operate fully with any investigation that might arise. We maintain a Register of Commissioners' Interests which is available to anyone who wishes to view it.

**Participation:** We work to ensure that individuals and groups feel that the Commission is their Commission. We strive to ensure that this happens particularly in our work on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and in our education work, but more generally we want to avail of people's expertise in all areas of our work.

## EQUALITY COMMITMENT

We are fundamentally committed to equality of opportunity in accordance with the Commission's Equality Scheme. We will therefore strive to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the Commission as well as in the activities we conduct. We will strive to comply fully with our statutory obligations and we will liaise closely with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to ensure that the two institutions work effectively together.

## **BUSINESS PLAN 2007–08**

This Business Plan describes the work proposed for the incoming year under each of the four strategic aims of the Commission and should be read in conjunction with the Commission's Strategic Plan 2006–09.

A range of strategic objectives is described under each of the aims. Some re-prioritising may be required during the year and the Commission wants to leave capacity to respond to new events as they occur. In addition there is a need to ensure that appropriate time and resources are dedicated to reflecting on the value of ongoing work and to monitoring the implementation of any previous recommendations and commitments.

### **Aim 1: Building a human rights culture in Northern Ireland**

#### **Strategic objectives**

- 1.1 To develop an inclusive and resourced education and training function to include the direct delivery of training, monitoring of others' and developing materials for human rights training.

#### **In-year target(s):**

- (a) Deliver, by December 2007, a training programme on an introduction to human rights
- (b) Deliver, by March 2008, a training programme on an international human rights instrument
- (c) Deliver, by January 2008, a two-day 'training the trainers' course on an introduction to human rights
- (d) Explore, by March 2008, the potential of organising a specialist Summer School for human rights practitioners
- (e) Continue to develop new training materials, including internet resources
- (f) Monitor and evaluate, by December 2007, the use of training materials produced by the Commission
- (g) Explore, by March 2008, the potential of seeking external funding for an expanded education and training function

- 1.2 To seek accreditation for introductory human rights training that can be delivered by a range of organisations.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Explore, by October 2007, Continuing Personal/Professional Development (CPD) accreditation from the Law Society Northern Ireland and offer credit points as part of Commission training programmes
- (b) Explore with other training providers delivery and progression options for human rights education and training by November 2007

- 1.3 To introduce to the public sector a human rights impact assessment framework to measure compliance with the Human Rights Act.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Explore, in partnership with public authorities, by January 2008, how to integrate models of human rights assessment in business planning processes
- (b) Explore, in partnership with government departments, by December 2007, how to integrate models of human rights assessment into business planning processes

- 1.4 To assist organisations and groups working to reduce sectarian conflict and violence to include a human rights dimension to their dialogue and action.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Produce, by March 2008, a training resource on conflict transformation and human rights
- (b) Seek to introduce, by November 2007, a human rights module in the training programmes of community relations/conflict transformation organisations
- (c) Organise, by March 2008, in collaboration with appropriate agencies a training programme on conflict transformation, mediation and human rights



1.5 To promote a strong and clear media message highlighting the value of a Bill of Rights and the universality of human rights.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Deliver, by March 2008, a public awareness raising campaign on the Bill of Rights in association with stakeholders
- (b) Work with media organisations and individual journalists, by January 2008, to increase understanding of the need and value of human rights work and, in particular, a Bill of Rights in Northern Ireland
- (c) Develop policy and review the Commission's communications and information access policy and materials by March 2008
- (d) Produce a range of accessible information materials on human rights including simplified texts to the main international human rights treaties by March 2008

1.6 To increase the Commission's presence and engagement in communities across Northern Ireland.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Increase the number of events and visits organised by the Commission outside Belfast, with a particular emphasis on community and voluntary organisations
- (b) Hold two Commission meetings outside Belfast during 2007–08, with opportunities to meet local political representatives and members of voluntary and community groups
- (c) Stage, by March 2008, the Commission's exhibition resource in at least four venues outside Belfast
- (d) Organise, in November 2007, an international conference to explore the relationship between the faith-based and human rights paradigms
- (e) Organise a reception with a local authority to mark International Human Rights Day 2007
- (f) Organise an annual conference for stakeholders in September 2007

1.7 To develop strategic partnerships with relevant organisations to help promote a human rights culture.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Monitor, review and update, by January 2008, the Commission's stakeholder management system
- (b) Review current, and develop and implement new, Memoranda of Understanding with other statutory authorities (see Aim 4, Objective 8 below) by March 2008
- (c) Explore, by February 2008, the potential of outreach work with the student/youth and disability sectors
- (d) Explore, by March 2008, the potential of organising staff exchanges with other regulatory and oversight agencies

1.8 To increase public awareness of the Commission and of international human rights standards and their relevance.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Produce, by March 2008, guides to four articles of the European Convention on Human Rights
- (b) Produce three issues of the 'NIHRC Review' magazine during 2007-08
- (c) Explore, by January 2008, the development of an arts strategy for the Commission
- (d) Commission, in association with relevant partners, a number of short films and pod casts on human rights themes by March 2008
- (e) Showcase, by June 2007, the work of student artists on visual communications and human rights themes
- (f) Measure, by March 2008, public awareness of human rights standards through a public opinion survey
- (g) Update, by October 2007, guides to the rights of migrant workers if required
- (h) Plan, by December 2007, a public awareness campaign on the continuing relevance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to mark its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008

1.9 To implement an agreed public affairs strategy, particularly in relation to the development of a Bill of Rights.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Produce, by March 2008, a range of briefings on key human rights themes including the Bill of Rights for key stakeholders such as politicians and journalists
- (b) Monitor and, where appropriate, support the work of the Bill of Rights Forum during the course of its deliberations (Objective 3.2(a) refers)
- (c) Continue to develop relationships with political and other contacts both locally and internationally by March 2008
- (d) Monitor and review the delivery of the Commission's public affairs strategy by March 2008

1.10 To develop resources and support for organisations working in the field of human rights.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Work with the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland in supporting non-governmental organisations' (NGOs) programmes on the Bill of Rights
- (b) Produce in partnership with stakeholders information materials on human rights
- (c) Explore, by March 2008, the human rights capacity building needs of NGOs as part of the formulation of a development strategy for the Commission

## **Aim 2: Challenging and preventing human rights abuse**

### **Strategic objectives**

2.1 To secure effective outcomes for individuals and groups who seek the support of the Commission in addressing human rights complaints or concerns.

#### **In-year target(s):**

- (a) Complete, by June 2007, consultation on the equality impact assessment (EQIA) of the new strategic approach to the delivery of the Commission's legal services
- (b) Depending on the outcome of the EQIA, implement from June 2007 the new strategic approach to the delivery of the Commission's legal services
- (c) Identify cases for the Commission to take in priority areas of law set out in the new Legal Strategy
- (d) Develop, by January 2008, a strategy on the use of the Commission's anticipated new powers in taking cases in its own name under the Human Rights Act
- (e) In respect of the Commission's anticipated new powers to compel witnesses and evidence, consider, by January 2008, the appropriateness and best use of non-adversarial inquiries to investigate and report on human rights complaints
- (f) Assess cases for support by the Commission in accordance with priorities set under its legal strategy, through monthly meetings of the Legal Committee
- (g) Support key cases in the courts as advised by the Legal Committee
- (h) Review the effectiveness of the legal services strategy

2.2 To promote the Human Rights Act 1998 and to increase the consideration given in the courts to applicable international human rights standards.

#### **In-year target(s):**

- (a) Apply for leave to intervene in appropriate cases as advised by the Legal Committee

- (b) Organise or contribute to at least two briefing events of specific interest to the judiciary and legal profession during 2007–08
- (c) Develop and publish information papers on areas of law as they relate to the protection of human rights identified as priority areas in the Commission's Legal Strategy
- (d) Provide advice and information to the legal profession on human rights issues upon request

2.3 To secure changes in public policy to reflect the Human Rights Act 1998 and international human rights standards.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Identify, by June 2007, key policy and legislative themes with major human rights implications with which to prioritise the Commission's policy submissions
- (b) Respond to key consultation documents issued in line with the priorities set by Objective 2.3(a) above, within stipulated timeframes
- (c) Monitor legislative proposals and developments with major human rights implications arising from the Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability and respond as appropriate
- (d) Review proposals, as they emerge, in respect of changing policy, practice and operational responsibilities in law enforcement and, as appropriate, provide advice on human rights compliance
- (e) Seek to ensure compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 in the administration of community restorative justice schemes through monitoring and responding to developments as appropriate
- (f) Produce, for publication on International Human Rights Day 2007, an assessment of key current human rights issues to be addressed by government
- (g) Review, by March 2008, the impact of previous policy recommendations made by the Commission

2.4 To manage and invest in relationships with other key agencies and stakeholders in the field.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Liaise with key public authorities in law enforcement, the coronial system and places of detention
- (b) Ensure effective mutual referral arrangements with public authorities that handle complaints and non-governmental advice agencies
- (c) Identify, by June 2007, current networks of human rights practitioners and make recommendations for participation in, and development of, further networks and fora by the Commission

2.5 To monitor the jurisprudence of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Court of Human Rights and other international fora.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Monitor implementation in Northern Ireland of strategically important recommendations made by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg
- (b) Promote awareness of case law developments in Northern Ireland
- (c) Produce, in plain language, an overview of Northern Ireland case law involving the Human Rights Act and of UK cases from the European Court of Human Rights, signposting relevant information resources and available on the Commission website, by March 2008

2.6 To monitor the impact of counter-terrorism measures on individual human rights protections.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Assess against relevant international human rights standards proposals for legislation and practice in respect of counter-terrorism and, as appropriate, provide advice to the government and others

- (b) Disseminate emerging international standards to inform debate on the protection of human rights in the context of counter–terrorism measures
- (c) Identify and work on three priority areas for monitoring and policy development by March 2008: identity cards, ‘suspect communities’ and anti–terrorism measures.

2.7 To use the Commission’s powers effectively to investigate key human rights concerns and build on previous investigations and research, and monitor the implementation of recommendations.

**In–year target(s):**

- (a) Complete a project to research suicide and self–harm in places of detention, focusing on women, young people and asylum seekers/immigration detainees and publish initial findings by March 2008; consider the need for further research into the experiences of adult male prisoners
- (b) Investigate immigration procedures in Northern Ireland and produce a report on initial findings by September 2007; organise a conference to discuss the findings by February 2008
- (c) Host, in April 2007, a symposium of experts to identify priority areas of work in respect of health care and human rights
- (d) Host, by March 2008, an international conference to discuss the priority areas, and scope a programme of work in respect of health care and human rights
- (e) Develop, by September 2007, a programme of further work in respect of places of detention
- (f) Develop, by March 2008, proposals for the treatment of people with personality disorders, with particular reference to those within the criminal justice system
- (g) Organise a seminar with appropriate service providers to develop sensitive identification protocols within a human rights framework for victims of trafficking by March 2008

2.8 To introduce a proactive approach to protecting social, economic and cultural rights.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Keep under review the effective implementation in Northern Ireland of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- (b) Organise a training programme, by July 2007, on the human rights analysis of public expenditure
- (c) With the Equality Commission, scope further work on the intersect between rights and poverty and inequality

2.9 To respond to the reporting mechanisms of international treaty monitoring bodies and to build the capacity of those most directly affected to respond effectively themselves.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Engage in the treaty monitoring process under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by preparing a parallel report for submission in time for the next examination, which is scheduled to take place in January 2008
- (b) Provide comments to government on draft UK reports under other international instruments, and prepare parallel reports in time for any examinations that may be scheduled
- (c) Contribute to the international networks of national human rights institutions in promoting a formal role for NHRIs in the monitoring procedures
- (d) Encourage the government to ratify further international instruments



- 2.10 To identify and develop cross–border pieces of work with the Irish Human Rights Commission through the Joint Committee.

**In–year target(s):**

- (a) In partnership with the Irish Human Rights Commission, consider a research project on the implications of the introduction of the Migrant Workers’ Convention on domestic law and policy in both jurisdictions.
- (b) In partnership with the Irish Human Rights Commission (and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Equality Authority in the Republic of Ireland), undertake a research project into the extent of human trafficking in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland
- (c) Contribute to further work by the Joint Committee through its sub–committees on a Charter of Rights for the island of Ireland, on Racism and the research focus group
- (d) Provide effective support to the Joint Committee and its sub–committees (see Aim 4, Objective 6)

**Aim 3: Building support for a Bill of Rights and working in partnership with others for its implementation**

**Strategic objectives**

- 3.1 To encourage public confidence in and support for the concept of a Bill of Rights.

**In–year target(s):**

- (a) Continue to promote public awareness of the importance of a Bill of Rights
- (b) Engage with key stakeholders and international experts on the process of developing and implementing a Bill of Rights
- (c) Provide, by March 2008, information on the process of developing and implementing a Bill of Rights
- (d) Continue to work with the Human Rights Consortium and other NGOs in promoting support for the concept of a Bill of Rights

- 3.2 To work to promote a forum of political parties and representatives of civil society as a way of achieving political consensus on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Monitor and, where appropriate, support the work the Bill of Rights Forum during the course of its deliberations
- (b) Meet on a regular basis with key stakeholders on the work of the Bill of Rights Forum while retaining our independence
- (c) Hold bi-monthly meetings with relevant stakeholders such as the Human Rights Consortium

- 3.3 To secure relevant information and advice from domestic and international sources in submitting advice to the Secretary of State.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) In light of developments with the Bill of Rights Forum, organise a conference to discuss the Commission's advice to the Secretary of State
- (b) Explore the provision of advice from international and local experts to the Commission as required on the Bill of Rights by March 2008

- 3.4 When appropriate, submit advice to the Secretary of State on a Bill of Rights.

**In-year target(s):** to be reviewed in light of progress by the Bill of Rights Forum

- (a) Continue to develop the Commission's position in respect of its advice to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the contents of the Bill of Rights
- (b) Explore, by March 2008, the preparations required by government to implement the Bill of Rights

- 3.5 To develop extensive political engagement in Northern Ireland and at Westminster with the Bill of Rights process.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Meet with the Northern Ireland Office on a regular basis to monitor progress on a Bill of Rights and political engagement with it
- (b) Meet regularly with lobby groups and political parties to update them and seek their views on progress towards a Bill of Rights

- 3.6 To co-ordinate, in partnership with political parties and others from civil society, an effective lobby to maintain momentum for the implementation of advice when submitted.

**In-year target(s):** this strategic objective is dependent on submission of the Commission's advice to the Secretary of State on a Bill of Rights (Objective 4 above), which in turn is linked to progress in respect of the Bill of Rights Forum

- 3.7 To secure a strong and inclusive Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, with wide public and political support.

**In-year target(s):** this strategic objective is a product of, and therefore dependent on, the achievement of all of the objectives listed above. Specific targets will be developed in respect of this objective once the Commission has submitted its advice to the Secretary of State on a Bill of Rights

## **Aim 4: Ensuring a strong and effective Human Rights Commission**

### **Strategic objectives**

- 4.1 To co-operate fully with and give due regard to a Landscape Review by government.

**In-year target(s):** The review did not proceed as a Landscape Review and therefore the strategic objective is withdrawn

4.2 To review the effectiveness of the organisation using guidance provided by the United Nations and other expert groups.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Establish criteria and methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of the Commission by September 2007
- (b) Develop, by September 2007, a training and development plan for Commissioners and staff in preparation for new statutory powers for the Commission, which are expected in 2008
- (c) Seek to secure, by March 2008, designation of the Commission as a National Preventative Mechanism under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

4.3 To implement and keep under review the Communications Strategy recently developed by the Commission.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Evaluate the Communications Strategy of the Commission and make recommendations for change as appropriate by March 2008
- (b) Develop and agree an information and communications access policy and procedure by March 2008

4.4 To implement a strategy to encourage stakeholder confidence in the Commission and its work.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Monitor and improve the Commission's stakeholder management system by March 2008
- (b) Review and prioritise the range of stakeholders the Commission engages with by March 2008
- (c) Assess the level of stakeholder satisfaction with the Commission by March 2008

- 4.5 To enhance working relationships with the government and administrations at Stormont, Westminster, Dublin, the Scottish and Welsh administrations, the Council of Europe, the United Nations and other bodies internationally.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Establish and maintain regular contact with officials and, where appropriate, elected representatives and relevant committees, to promote human rights concerns as they affect people in Northern Ireland
- (b) Share good practice and endorse policy positions where common cause can be identified in promoting international standards
- (c) Work, from October 2007, with the Commission for Equality and Human Rights in Great Britain and the Scottish Human Rights Commission, developing commentary on UK-wide policy and legislation and access to international fora

- 4.6 To maintain an effective partnership with the Irish Human Rights Commission and secure sufficient resources to ensure the effective operation of the Joint Committee of Representatives of the two Human Rights Commissions on the island of Ireland.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Secure, by September 2007, discrete resources for the Joint Committee
- (b) Hold four Joint Committee meetings during 2007–08, together with associated sub-committee meetings

- 4.7 To build on and develop international networks among national human rights institutions and international NGOs.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Participate in the Council of Europe, United Nations and Commonwealth networks of national human rights institutions
- (b) Identify and follow up networking opportunities among NHRIs and international NGOs as they occur

- (c) Build bilateral co-operation with other NHRIs, and participate in technical co-operation and training initiatives through the European Group of NHRIs, the Office of the High Commissioner and other bodies, where opportunities arise
- (d) Increase engagement with the international human rights systems and their reform processes, including the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights, the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency, and the revised United Nations structures and treaty monitoring bodies.
- (e) Explore, by September 2007, the appropriateness of the Commission acting as the 'focal point' for an international project to review the relationship between NHRIs and the Human Rights Council
- (f) Develop, by March 2008, an action plan to take forward work in relation to migration arising out of the declaration made at the Eighth International Conference of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Santa Cruz, Republic of Bolivia, 24–26 October 2006 (the 'Santa Cruz Declaration')

4.8 To ensure that effective Memoranda of Understanding operate with relevant bodies in Northern Ireland and that the relationship with the sponsor department is monitored and regularly reviewed.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Review, by September 2007, current Memoranda of Understanding and revise as appropriate to ensure effective working arrangements
- (b) Develop and implement new Memoranda of Understanding by March 2008

4.9 To secure sufficient resources, and manage them effectively, to achieve the Commission's mandate.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Develop and implement the Commission's revised Management Statement and Financial Memorandum with the Northern Ireland Office from April 2007

- (b) Maintain and, where appropriate, update revised financial procedures manual, including procurement policy, to reflect best practice in respect of financial management and equality and human rights considerations
- (c) Maintain, review at least quarterly and, where appropriate, update the Commission corporate risk register
- (d) Maintain and, where appropriate, update a comprehensive assets register, with a full inventory check in February 2008
- (e) Review the effectiveness of the structure of the Commission's committees and working groups by December 2007
- (f) Ensure that the financial accounts for 2006–07 are submitted to the Comptroller and Auditor General by June 2007 and, once certified, published with the Annual Report in October 2007
- (g) Complete, by July 2007, a job evaluation exercise of all staff posts
- (h) Put in place, by September 2007, an action plan for the achievement of the Investors in People Standard, and explore the relevance of other quality standards to improving the delivery of Commission's services (eg Lexcel and Charter Mark)
- (i) Put in place and monitor a training and development plan for staff and Commissioners by June 2007
- (j) Induct effectively two new Commissioners, who are expected to be appointed in December 2007
- (k) Develop and undertake a staff attitude survey by June 2007
- (l) Ensure through internal and external audit activities that sound financial control systems are in place
- (m) To streamline, by September 2007, the Commission's invoice payments system by maximising use of e-banking facilities.

4.10 To enhance the ICT capacity of the Commission in order to promote its work effectively.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Review and update, by September 2007, the effectiveness of the Commission's IT infrastructure and support system
- (b) Review, develop and implement new telephone systems including a text service facility by December 2007
- (c) Develop an intranet resource for the organisation by March 2008
- (d) Further develop and promote the web sites managed by the Commission including a resource on international human rights standards by March 2008.

4.11 To maximise the use of the Commission's information resources, including the reference library.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Develop increased use of the reference library through implementation of a strategy from May 2007
- (b) Provide website access to the catalogue of library holdings by February 2008

4.12 To comply with all statutory requirements placed on a public body.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Develop, consult on and implement a disability action plan, by July 2007, as required by the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006
- (b) Undertake, by July 2007, a review of the effectiveness of the first five years' operation of Commission's Equality Scheme, as required by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
- (c) Review health and safety risk assessment and associated management arrangements at least every six months
- (d) Process requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 within 15 working days of receipt



- (e) Pay 100% of valid invoices within 30 days of receipt
- (f) Ensure that equality and other statistical returns are made on time
- (g) Review and update the Commission's Freedom of Information Publication Scheme by November 2007

4.13 To review and implement a programme for interns and volunteers.

**In-year target(s):**

- (a) Provide places for six internships during 2007–08 and review the effectiveness of the policy by March 2008,
- (b) Explore, by March 2008, options for developing a volunteering policy

## BUDGET 2007–08

### EMPLOYMENT COSTS

Staff	£820,000
Commissioners	£175,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£995,000</b>

### RUNNING COSTS

Rent	£105,000
Rates	£45,000
Electricity/Gas	£17,000
Phone/fax/alarm	£10,000
Cleaning	£1,000
Postage	£15,000
Travel	£35,000
Subsistence and hospitality	£15,000
Insurance	£6,000
Stationery	£20,000
Professional Fees	£30,000
Interns expenses	£2,000
IT	£20,000
Office Furniture/Equipment	£10,000
Equipment Rental	£4,000
Premises Expenses	£20,000
Recruitment costs	£15,000
Training and development	£25,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£395,000</b>

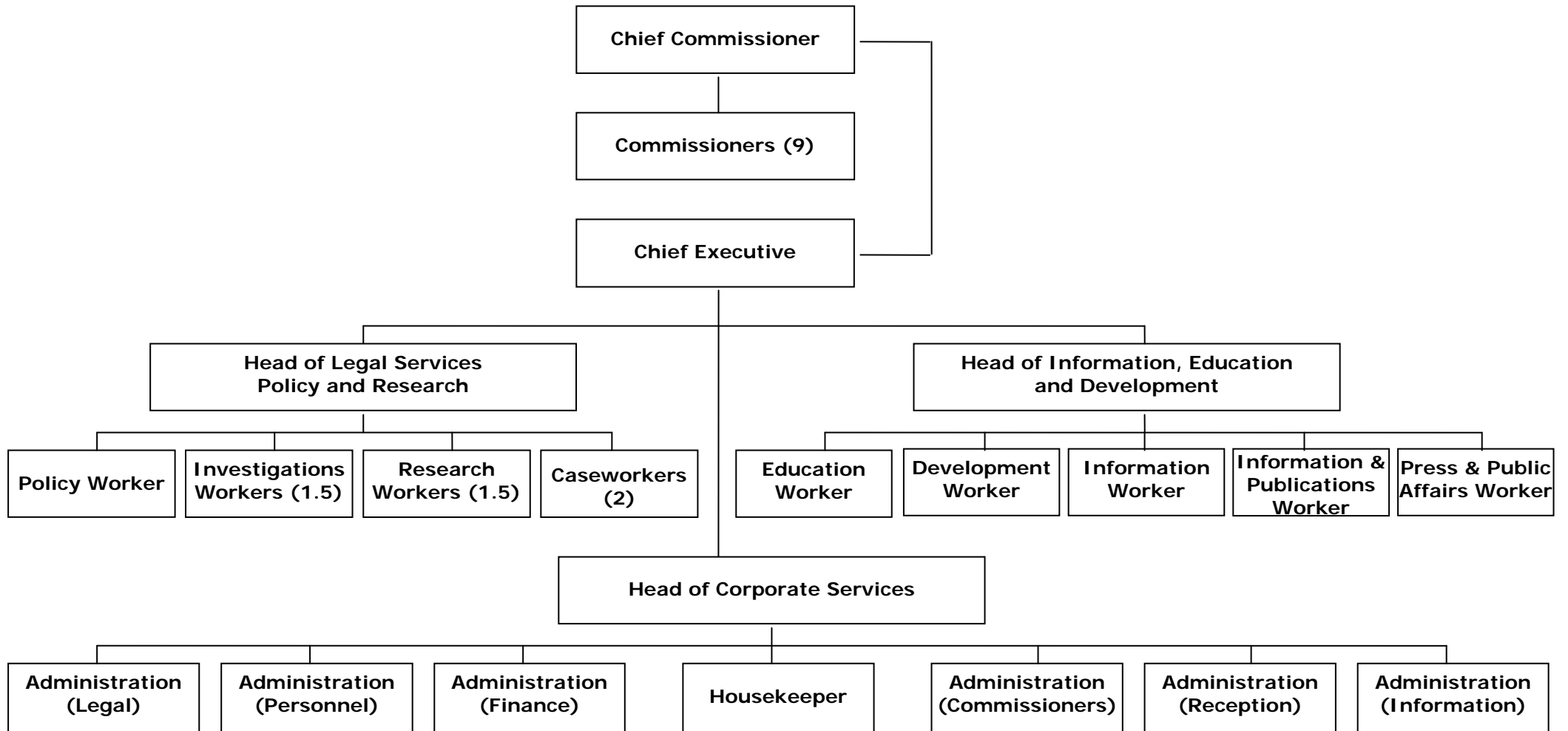
### PROGRAMME COSTS

Legal services, including casework	£50,000
Education/training materials	£15,000
External events	£35,000
Investigations	£11,000
Media monitoring/PR	£10,000
Publications produced	£40,000
Publications purchased	£10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£171,000</b>

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,561,000</b>
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# ORGANISATION CHART

# Appendix 1



### **COMMISSIONERS (as at April 2007)**

#### **Chief Commissioner**

Professor Monica McWilliams was appointed full time Chief Commissioner for Human Rights in Northern Ireland from September 2005. Previously, she was Professor of Women's Studies and Social Policy at the University of Ulster and served as a Member of the Legislative Assembly in Northern Ireland from 1996 to 2003. She was the co-founder of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, a political party involved in the Northern Ireland Forum from 1996 to 1998. She was an elected member of the Multi-Party Peace Negotiations and a signatory to the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in 1998.

During the negotiations following the Agreement, she was the Chairperson of the Human Rights Sub-Committee until 2003. Monica has published two books on domestic violence in Northern Ireland. Her work has been recognised by the John F Kennedy Leadership and Courage Award and the Frank Cousin's Peace Award. She has received a Doctor of Humane Letters from Lesley College, Massachusetts and Mount Mary College, Milwaukee and is a graduate of Queens University Belfast and the University of Michigan.

#### **Commissioners**

There are nine other Commissioners who work part-time for the Commission (approximately one day per week). They are:

##### **Jonathan Bell**

Jonathan Bell is a graduate of Queens University Belfast with a BA (Honours) Psychology (1991) and Master of Social Work (1996). He also holds a Diploma in Social Work – CCETSW 1996.

Jonathan was a councillor for Craigavon Borough Council during 1997–2005 and was elected to Ards Borough Council in 2005. He is a member of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, a Director of the Local Government International Bureau and professionally practices as Senior Practitioner in an adolescent social work team.

Jonathan was appointed as a part-time member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from September 2005.

## **Thomas Duncan**

Thomas Duncan was Headmaster of the Royal School Armagh between 1988 and 2002 and Deputy Headmaster of Dalriada School, Ballymoney from 1974 until 1988 where he also acted as Head of Science. His main qualifications include MA (NUU) – Education Administration, DASE (NUU) – Education Administration and BSc (QUB) – Chemistry (Honours).

He has fulfilled a number of public roles which include acting as the Chairman of Armagh Together, Armagh Marketing Initiative 1995, Armagh District Scout Council, the Northern Ireland Boarding Schools Partnership and Armagh Rotary Club. He was also a member of the Armagh Diocesan Board of Education, Secretary of the Friends of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh and Executive Officer of the 1608 Royal Schools which celebrate their 400th Anniversary in 2008. His interests include travelling, golf, theatre and sport.

Thomas was appointed as a part-time member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from September 2005.

## **Lady Christine Eames OBE**

Lady Eames was formerly World President of the Mothers' Union from 1995 to 2000. She is a law graduate with an MPhil in Medical Ethics and recently chaired the Human Rights Committee of the Mental Health Review Team, on behalf of the Commission. A Central Trustee of Christian Aid in Ireland and worldwide, Christine has an active interest in cross community work and young people.

Lady Eames was appointed as a part-time member to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from December 2001. She was awarded an OBE in the 2006 New Year's Honours List for services to the community in Northern Ireland.

## **Ann Hope**

Ann Hope was Advisory Services Officer with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions for 14 years where she had responsibility for gender equality and for progressing work on Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Single Equality legislation and the proposed Bill of Rights.

She also has a background in adult and community education and prior to working for Congress worked as a tutor organiser with the Workers' Educational Association where she taught trade union studies and women's studies.

An active trade unionist all her working life, Ann has held many positions in the trade union movement at Branch, Regional and National levels and was President of the Belfast and District Council of Trade Unions.

She has served on a number of public bodies including the Board of Prison Visitors for Maghaberry Prison, the Health and Safety Agency, the Equal Opportunities Commission, of which she was Deputy Chair, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Women's National Commission, the government's official independent advisory body on women. She was a founder member of Democratic Dialogue and its chair for five years. She was a member of the former Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, serving on its Executive Committee. She is currently a Governor of the Pensions Policy Institute.

She holds a Masters in Education, a BA in History and Politics and a Diploma in Trade Union Studies.

Ann was appointed as a part-time member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from September 2005.

### **Colin Harvey**

Colin Harvey is Professor of Human Rights Law and Director of the Human Rights Centre, School of Law, Queen's University Belfast. From 2000–2004 he was Professor of Constitutional and Human Rights Law, School of Law, University of Leeds and Co-Convenor of the Human Rights Research Unit. In 1999, he was a Visiting Professor at the Refugee and Asylum Law Program, Faculty of Law, University of Michigan. Professor Harvey is on the Advisory Board of the British Institute of Human Rights. He was a member of the Northern Ireland Higher Education Council from 2002-2006 and a member of the Steering Committee of the UK section of the International Association of Constitutional Law from 2003–2006. He was Refugee Co-ordinator for Amnesty International (Irish Section) 1998–2000 and a member of the Executive of the Committee on the Administration of Justice 1999–2000. He is on the editorial board of *Human Rights Law Review* and is the Case Editor for the *International Journal of Refugee Law*.

Professor Harvey has published extensively in academic, and more popular formats, on issues of human rights law and politics. His publications include: *Seeking Asylum in the UK: Problems and Prospects* (2000, Butterworths), *Human Rights in the Community: Rights as Agents for Change* (ed., 2005, Hart Publishing), *Sanctuary in Ireland: Perspectives on Asylum Law and Policy* (ed., with Ursula Fraser, 2004, Institute of Public Administration), *Human Rights, Equality and Democratic Renewal in Northern Ireland* (ed., 2001, Hart Publishing), (with

J.C. Hathaway) 'Framing Refugee Protection in the New World Disorder' (2001) *Cornell International Law Journal* 257, 'The Right to Seek Asylum in the European Union' (2004) *European Human Rights Law Review* 17–36, 'Dissident Voices: Refugees, Human Rights and Asylum in Europe' (2000) 9 *Social and Legal Studies* 367.

Colin was appointed as a part–time member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from September 2005.

### **Alan Henry**

Alan Henry was Head of Human Resources, Royal Mail, from 1988 to 2003. He is currently a lay panel member on industrial tribunals, an Independent Assessor for the Office of Public Appointments, a Civil Service Commissioner and a National Clinical Assessment Service Assessor.

Until recently, Alan was a Department of Education Lay Schools Inspector and a member of the Lord Chancellors Advisory Committee on Lay Magistrates, and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. Alan was appointed as a part–time member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from September 2005.

### **Kevin McLaughlin**

Kevin McLaughlin is a freelance trainer and consultant on disability issues. He previously was a member of the Civic Forum. Kevin is also a member of the Ofcom Consumer Panel.

A graduate of the University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast, he also holds an MA in Disability Studies from Leeds University.

Kevin was appointed as a part–time member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from December 2001.

### **Eamonn O'Neill**

Eamonn O'Neill was a school teacher for 30 years in St Malachy's High School, Castlewellan and Vice principal for the last ten of those years. An elected councillor to Down Council from 1977 to the present, he has held all the major positions in the council. Eamonn was a long time member of the Northern Ireland Housing Council and was appointed to the Board of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive from 1995 to 1998. He was also a member and past chairman on two occasions of the East Border Region from May 1977 until May 2005. He was elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly and appointed chairman of the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure 1998 to 2003.

He also served as chairman and vice chairman of the Down District Policing Partnership from 2002 to the present and was Northern Ireland chairman and then national chairman of the Association of Public Services Excellence in 2003. In addition he founded and chaired the local regeneration group Castlewellan Regeneration from 1991 to the present.

Eamonn was appointed as a part-time member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from September 2005.

### **Geraldine Rice MBE**

From 1995 until retirement in 2006, Geraldine Rice was a self-employed trainer and consultant to the hospitality industry, and a trainer in food hygiene for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Geraldine was awarded an MBE in the 2007 News Year's Honours List for services to Local Government in Northern Ireland. She was elected as an Alliance Party councillor in 1989 and is still serving in that capacity as Alderman and most recently as Deputy Mayor for Castlereagh Borough Council. Having been a board member of Clanmil Housing Association since 1998 and elected chair in 2004, she has served as chair of the finance committee and a Director of Clanmil Properties and Clanmil Ireland (both of these positions are voluntary). She has also been a member of the Police Authority for Northern Ireland and is a former member of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland. Geraldine currently serves as a board member of the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland. She is a member of the Castlereagh District Policing Partnership and a Non-Executive Director of the Sperrin Lakeland Trust.

Her qualifications include Member of the Institute of Cleaning Science MB/Csc, registered trainer with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Accredited Trainers Certificate Chartered Trust Environmental Health, ECDL Certificate in Computer Skills, OCR Certificate in Counselling Skills and a University of Ulster Certificate in Counselling. She recently undertook a course on leadership at Harvard University.

Geraldine was appointed as a part-time member of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission from September 2005.



## Appendix 3

### STAFF (as at April 2007)

<b>Chief Executive</b>	Paddy Sloan
<b>Head of Information, Education &amp; Development</b>	Peter O'Neill
<b>Head of Legal Services, Policy &amp; Research</b>	Ciarán Ó Maoláin
<b>Head of Corporate Services</b>	Don Leeson
<b>Information Worker</b>	Nadia Downing
<b>Information and Publications Worker</b>	Vacant
<b>Education Worker</b>	Rebecca Dudley
<b>Development Worker</b>	Miriam Titterton
<b>Press and Public Affairs Worker</b>	Vacant
<b>Caseworkers</b>	Angela Stevens Virginia McVea Mairead Hegarty
<b>Investigations Workers</b>	Nazia Latif Linda Moore Ann Jemphrey
<b>Policy Worker</b>	Vacant
<b>Research Workers</b>	Agnieszka Martynowicz
<b>Administrative Officers</b>	Roisin Carlin Rebecca Eaton Louise Furber Lorraine Hamill Brenda Madden Bernadette Rooney
<b>Housekeeper</b>	Gillian Neill

Also: Denise Magill (on career break)  
Edel Teague (on secondment to CCMS)

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

**Extract from the Northern Ireland Act 1998**

**Functions of the Commission**

69. (1) The Commission shall keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness in Northern Ireland of law and practice relating to the protection of human rights.
- (2) The Commission shall, before the end of the period of two years beginning with the commencement of this section, make to the Secretary of State such recommendations as it thinks fit for improving –
- (a) its effectiveness;
  - (b) the adequacy and effectiveness of the functions conferred on it by this Part; and
  - (c) the adequacy and effectiveness of the provisions of this Part relating to it.
- (3) The Commission shall advise the Secretary of State and the Executive Committee of the Assembly of legislative and other measures which ought to be taken to protect human rights –
- (a) as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of a general or specific request for advice; and
  - (b) on such other occasions as the Commission thinks appropriate.
- (4) The Commission shall advise the Assembly whether a Bill is compatible with human rights –
- (a) as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of a request for advice; and
  - (b) on such other occasions as the Commission thinks appropriate.

- (5) The Commission may –
- (a) give assistance to individuals in accordance with section 70; and
  - (b) bring proceedings involving law or practice relating to the protection of human rights.
- (6) The Commission shall promote understanding and awareness of the importance of human rights in Northern Ireland; and for this purpose it may undertake, commission or provide financial or other assistance for-
- (a) research; and
  - (b) educational activities.
- (7) The Secretary of State shall request the Commission to provide advice of the kind referred to in paragraph 4 of the Human Rights section of the Belfast Agreement.
- (8) For the purpose of exercising its functions under this section the Commission may conduct such investigations as it considers necessary or expedient.
- (9) The Commission may decide to publish its advice and the outcome of its research and investigations.
- (10) The Commission shall do all that it can to ensure the establishment of the committee referred to in paragraph 10 of that section of that Agreement.
- (11) In this section –
- (a) a reference to the Assembly includes a reference to a committee of the Assembly;
  - (b) “human rights” includes the Convention rights.

## Assistance by the Commission

70. (1) This section applies to—
- (a) proceedings involving law or practice relating to the protection of human rights which a person in Northern Ireland has commenced, or wishes to commence; or
  - (b) proceedings in the course of which such a person relies, or wishes to rely, on such law or practice.
- (2) Where the person applies to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission for assistance in relation to proceedings to which this section applies, the Commission may grant the application on any of the following grounds—
- (a) that the case raises a question of principle;
  - (b) that it would be unreasonable to expect the person to deal with the case without assistance because of its complexity, or because of the person's position in relation to another person involved, or for some other reason;
  - (c) that there are other special circumstances which make it appropriate for the Commission to provide assistance.
- (3) Where the Commission grants an application under subsection (2) it may—
- (a) provide, or arrange for the provision of, legal advice;
  - (b) arrange for the provision of legal representation;
  - (c) provide any other assistance which it thinks appropriate.
- (4) Arrangements made by the Commission for the provision of assistance to a person may include provision for recovery of expenses from the person in certain circumstances.

**Note:** It is anticipated that the Commission's powers will be changed through enactment of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Bill, currently progressing through Parliament.