

**Charity Commission for Northern Ireland**

**Corporate Plan 2013-2016**

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# 1. Chair and Chief Executive Introduction

We are pleased to introduce the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's 2013-2016 Corporate Plan.

The period of this plan will see the start of charity registration within Northern Ireland. This is a new development for local charities and society in general. The planning has been shaped by a commitment to implementing registration in a phased and co-ordinated manner.

In planning the registration process we estimate that 7,000-10,000 local organisations will form the core of the new Register of Charities. These organisations are far from homogenous; they include churches, committees, schools, drop-in groups, universities, clubs and societies working in towns, cities and villages throughout Northern Ireland.

This plan sets out how we will register and regulate these organisations in a way that fulfils our statutory obligations while nurturing their individualism and vibrancy. How we do this is underpinned by our values of independence, accountability, proportionality, impartiality, transparency and consistency.

The next three years will be busy and inevitably challenging but we face the future with enthusiasm, optimism and a sense of readiness. The legislative problem that has held up registration to date has come as a great source frustration for the Commission and many of our internal work processes have been hampered and made more difficult by it. We appreciate the patience of all working in the charity sector.

Elements of this planning process have been aided by the benefit of hindsight, having used parts of our regulatory powers whilst awaiting registration. The Commission continues to develop as a young organisation challenged to meet our burgeoning statutory obligations alongside the expectations of our stakeholders.

In developing this plan we have not lost sight of the external realities, including the continuing impact on charities of difficult economic conditions. While we cannot directly mitigate the tough situations that many charities find themselves in, we can assist by promoting public trust and confidence in charities. This is the Commission's aim during the next three year period.

Tom McGrath  
Frances McCandless



Tom McGrath CBE  
Chief Commissioner



Frances McCandless  
Chief Executive

## 2. Executive Summary

### Our 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 and advisory role.'

### Our aims

#### Public confidence

To increase public trust and confidence in charities.

#### Public benefit

To promote awareness and understanding of the operation of the public benefit requirement.

#### Compliance

To promote compliance by charity trustees with their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the administration of their charities.

#### Charitable resources

To promote the effective use of charitable resources.

#### Accountability

To enhance the accountability of charities to donors, beneficiaries and the public.

#### Delivery

To manage the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland as an effective and efficient non-departmental public body.

### Our Values

- **Independent:** we will maintain independence in our decision making, acting without fear or favour, in the public interest.
- **Accountable:** we will be proactive in accounting to all our stakeholders, which will include involving others on a continuous and appropriate basis and taking responsibility for our decisions.
- **Proportionate:** our actions, procedures and culture will be proportionate to the burden of regulation on charities, of different sizes, to the degree of risk involved and to the potential impact, within the resources available to us.
- **Impartial:** we will exercise our powers and discretion in a way which is non-partisan and even-handed.
- **Transparent:** we will communicate with and listen to our stakeholders and will be clear about our actions, intentions and expectations.
- **Consistent:** we will act consistently in our decision making.

### 3. About us

This is the third three year rolling Corporate Plan produced by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, as the independent regulator of charities in Northern Ireland.

The Commission is a non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), established by Royal Assent to deliver the legislative requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008. We are sponsored by the Department for Social Development (DSD).

The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 introduced a new regulatory framework for the charitable sector in Northern Ireland. The previous framework did not provide for any form of registration and only made limited provisions for enforcement generally. The main objectives of the 2008 Act are to introduce:

- an integrated system of registration and regulation; and
- supervision and support of registered charities.

The aim of these changes is to provide a structure and process through which:

- charities can demonstrate their contribution to society;
- public trust and confidence in charities is enhanced; and
- appropriate charity governance is promoted.

The Commission has a crucial role to play in the development of charities, enabling them to meet modern expectations and obligations. It is essential that charities operate in a climate of public trust and confidence through the provision of firm and fair regulation.

The Commission aims therefore to develop a regulatory framework which is not only about intervention and strong governance, but which, over the longer term, promotes standards and good practice. Our regulation is responsive to the charity sector, mindful of the need to promote the good work that charities do, and geared towards protecting charities from abuse, misconduct and mismanagement.

It is also important that we develop effective relationships and work in partnership with those engaged in charitable activities. This will involve the provision of advice and guidance to assist charities with compliance issues but also requires development of an ethos which promotes confidence in public charitable giving, encourages sharing of best practice and ultimately helps to raise standards.

## Our Vision

The Commission's vision is to deliver, in partnership with other key stakeholders in the charitable sector:

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

## Our Aims

The Commission's objectives are set out in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) with DSD, under which the Commission operates. For the purposes of this corporate plan we are treating these objectives as the Commission's overarching aims with subsequent strategic, measurable and time-bound objectives, targets and actions.

- 1. Public confidence objective:** to increase public trust and confidence in charities.
- 2. Public benefit objective:** to promote awareness and understanding of the operation of the public benefit requirement.
- 3. Compliance objective:** to promote compliance by charity trustees with their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the administration of their charities.
- 4. Charitable resources objective:** to promote the effective use of charitable resources.
- 5. Accountability objective:** to enhance the accountability of charities to donors, beneficiaries and the public.
- 6. Delivery objective:** to manage the Commission as an effective and efficient NDPB.

## Our Values

The Commission aspires to be respected and valued in the execution of its functions and to demonstrate best practice as a regulator and as a public body. We will ensure that in the performance of our role as the charity regulator for Northern Ireland we will be:

- **Independent:** we will maintain independence in our decision making, acting without fear or favour, in the public interest.
- **Accountable:** we will be proactive in accounting to all our stakeholders, which will include involving others on a continuous and appropriate basis and taking responsibility for our decisions.
- **Proportionate:** our actions, procedures and culture will be proportionate to the burden of regulation on charities of different sizes, to the degree of risk involved and to the potential impact within the resources available to us.
- **Impartial:** we will exercise our powers and discretion in a way which is non-partisan and even-handed.
- **Transparent:** we will communicate with and listen to our stakeholders and will be clear about our actions, intentions and expectations.
- **Consistent:** we will act consistently in our decision making.

## Looking back

### Key progress 2011 - 2012

- Significant progress on the development and implementation of a suite of organisational policies and procedures.
- Implementation of a communications strategy resulting in over 500 general enquiries about our work and over 35,000 unique visits to our website and ongoing regional media coverage of, amongst other aspects of our work, investigations.
- Further liaison with DSD regarding technical aspects of the Charities Act (NI) 2008 and transition of powers.
- Implementation of investigation processes eliciting 106 concerns about charities in the first year with 74 investigations progressed to conclusion.
- Publication of a list of organisations in Northern Ireland which are charities for tax purposes.
- Guidance published on lobbying and political activity and charities and door step charity collections.
- Publication of the first in a series of thematic reports looking at concerns received about charities.
- Further refinement and internal testing of online registration, registration processes and procedures pending Executive amendment to Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.
- Transition to a rolling three year Corporate Planning process.
- The majority of new staff appointments joining in the first quarter and move to a new permanent premises.

### Key progress 2012 - 2013

- Further liaison with DSD regarding technical aspects of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and passing of the Charities Bill in February 2013.
- Continued communications activities resulting in over 30,527 unique visits to our website and 542 general enquiries about our role.
- Attending and delivering 29 seminars and workshops across Northern Ireland, aimed at increasing understanding of the role and powers of the Charity Commission.
- 67 concerns about charities received with 48 progressed to conclusion.
- Three statutory investigations initiated and ongoing.
- Further refinement and internal testing of online registration, registration processes and procedures in anticipation of Executive amendment to Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.
- Development, and submission to Equality Commission for approval, of a draft Equality Scheme and Action Plan detailing our commitment to equality across all of our work.
- Publication of second in a series of thematic reports looking at concerns about charity fundraising.



## Looking Forward

Since 2010 the Commission has set out anticipated developments and resource needs in its corporate plans. After three years of operation we have reviewed our activities, our understanding of the strategic context and have reappraised our objectives and resource needs accordingly. In the coming three year period the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland will focus on all six statutory aims which govern its work.

The Commission sees the following areas of work as its key challenges over the coming three-year period:

- Managing the volume of charity registrations, which may number over 10,000.
- Managing cy-près and other casework volume to meet the expectations of those who require decisions and consents under charity law.
- Managing the volume of concerns about charities which result in investigations or the provision of regulatory advice.
- Designing, consulting on and implementing a Monitoring and Compliance programme, which includes charity accounts. This will be the programme through which all charities will submit annual returns to us, including their accounts, annual report and other information.
- Dealing with Charity Tribunal cases as they arise and the intensive and complex legal work this will require.
- Commencement of further sections of the Act to include:
  - Mergers;
  - Group accounts;
  - Official Custodian;
  - Charity land;
- Ongoing development of our internal processes to implement these new areas of work once the legislation has been brought into force.
- Ongoing development of associated external guidance so that we can explain to our service users what these new parts of the legislation mean for them.
- The strategic development of a continuing programme of guidance and policies, both internal and external, as identified in our policy development plan. This will provide an increasingly extensive range of advice and information to charities and the public on complying with charity law
- The design and commencement of a research strategy, so that we can monitor and understand the impact of charity law and so that we can make best use of the large amount of data we will be gathering about local charities. In this way charities will be able to benefit from this information gathering and hopefully see a return for the information which they provide to us.
- Implementing the findings of an IT review, integrating a new IT workflow management system and ensuring that our other systems are fit for purpose.
- Rewriting of many of our existing processes once registration has begun, since all our existing processes thus far are designed to work around the absence of a Register of Charities.

We have drawn upon our experiences of service delivery to plan scenarios which we have used to inform the assumptions underlying this corporate plan and the resulting business plans.

## Key Performance Targets

Our key targets over the next three years are:

### External

- to deliver 9,000 charity registrations;
- to achieve satisfaction with public benefit guidance above 75%;
- to complete 130 investigations every year;
- to produce six reports on the findings of our investigations work every year;
- to ensure that 80% of concerns raised about charities will have their initial enquiry risk assessments completed within 30 days;
- to produce 39 pieces of external guidance; and
- to achieve 30,000 hits on our website every year.

### Internal

- to complete 90% of business plan actions;
- to ensure an appropriate staffing structure is in place to deliver the corporate plan;
- to manage the organisation within 1% budget;
- to ensure an integrated IT system is implemented;
- to manage staff sickness absence within 3%;
- to pay 90% of suppliers within 10 days.

## Risks to the delivery of this plan

This plan is underpinned by a number of assumptions. Due to these assumptions, the Commission recognises the following risks to the delivery of this plan:

- The Charities Bill received Royal assent early in 2013. The passing of the Bill allowed us to publish and consult upon our Public Benefit and Registration Guidance. Thereafter, the commencement of registration will be a landmark and long awaited development for the Commission. Any delays to this process will have consequential effects across other programmes of work
- The regulatory work of the Commission, in particular in relation to investigations, also takes us into uncharted territory. Investigations are becoming more complex in nature, often involving multiple issues. The number of cases that result in Charity Tribunal hearings cannot be predicted in advance and are of necessity highly resource intensive.
- The Commission's work will be highly dependent on an integrated IT system. Not only will this enable the management of information and case work flows internally, but it will provide a portal for online interaction and exchange of information between the Commission and all charities. Failure to secure the appropriate system or loss of a strategic IT provider would present serious risks to the delivery of targets.
- The Commission is dependent on the making of regulations and Commencement Orders by DSD. Any slippage in the Department's timetables will result in the Commission being unable to deliver planned work.

## **4. Governance and accountability**

### **Board**

The Charity Commissioners are appointed by the Minister for Social Development. Whilst Commissioners are selected by Ministerial Appointment, the Commission is an arm's length body, responsible for the structure, recruitment and appointment of its own staff, including the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team.

The Commission has a Board comprising a Chief Commissioner, a Deputy Chief Commissioner and up to five Charity Commissioners, all on a part-time basis. At least one Charity Commissioner must be a barrister or solicitor of at least seven years standing.

The Board has a responsibility for the Commission's overall strategy and future direction.

The current Charity Commissioners are:

Chief Charity Commissioner	Mr Thomas McGrath
Deputy Commissioner	Mr Walter Rader
Legally Qualified Commissioner	Ms Rosemary Connolly
Charity Commissioner	Mr Philip McDonagh
Charity Commissioner	Mr Norman Bennett
Charity Commissioner	Ms Brenda Maitland
Charity Commissioner	Ms Geraldine Donaghy

The Board is supported by an Audit and Risk Committee and a Human Resources and Remuneration Committee. Our website provides further information on our Board including their declaration of interests.

### **Committees**

#### **Audit and Risk Committee**

The Audit and Risk Committee supports the Board in its responsibilities regarding issues of risk, control and governance and associated assurances. Its oversight role includes, but is not limited to, internal and external audit, the Commission's financial statements and risk management.

#### **Human Resources and Remuneration Committee**

The Human Resources and Remuneration Committee supports the Board in its responsibilities regarding issues of staff resource and staff performance, including, but not limited to, recruitment, staff structure, remuneration and resource, human resource policies and practice and legislative compliance.

## **Chief Executive**

The role of the Chief Executive carries with it the designation of Accounting Officer by the Departmental Accounting Officer of the sponsor Department. The Accounting Officer is personally responsible for safeguarding public funds for which she has charge, for ensuring propriety and regularity in the handling of those public funds and for the day-to-day operations and management of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

In particular, the role involves the following responsibilities:

- Planning, establishing and monitoring, in agreement with the Sponsor Department and the Commission's Board, the Commission's corporate and business plans in support of wider strategic aims and the outcomes and targets contained in its current Public Service Agreement.
- Advising the Board on discharging its responsibilities.
- Managing risk and resources: ensuring that a system of risk management is maintained to inform decisions on financial and operational planning to help achieve objectives and targets, and to ensure that effective programme, project and contract management systems are maintained.
- Accounting for the Commission's activities.

## **Operational activity**

Operational management of the Commission is carried out by a senior management team led by the Chief Executive, Frances McCandless. The Chief Executive is supported by the Head of Charity Services, Head of Corporate Services, and the Head of Compliance & Enquiries. This team makes decisions involving day-to-day operations and implements the programmes and policies arising from the Board's decisions.

The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 lays out the operational areas of work for the Commission. As part of the transition from the previous system of charity law to the new regulatory framework, administered by the Commission, a series of commencement orders will enact the primary legislation laid down in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008. These areas of work will include a portfolio of programmes, regulation and assurance:

- Registration programme for all charities.
- Annual monitoring and compliance programme for all registered charities.
- Consents programme.
- Cy-près programme.
- Investigations function.
- Interim Manager.
- Tribunal Process.
- Official Custodian.
- Removing/suspending trustees and/or employees.

- Closures for registered charities.
- Regulation of fundraising.

## **Equality and disability**

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland is committed to the fulfilment of its Section 75 obligations, under the Northern Ireland Act 1998, in all aspects of its work. The Commission has worked with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to deliver an equality scheme which will be implemented throughout the life of this Corporate Plan. Responsibility for the effective development, implementation, maintenance and review of equality lies with the Chair and Chief Executive.

Under amendments made to the Disability Discrimination Act in 2006, the Charity Commission must take into account the need to promote positive attitudes towards people with a disability, and to encourage participation by disabled people in public life. The Commission is committed to developing and implementing a Disability Action Plan during the life of this Corporate Plan.

## **Freedom of Information and Publication Scheme**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 has created a statutory right of access to public information. As a public body, the Commission has an obligation and is committed to providing information where available and no exemption applies.

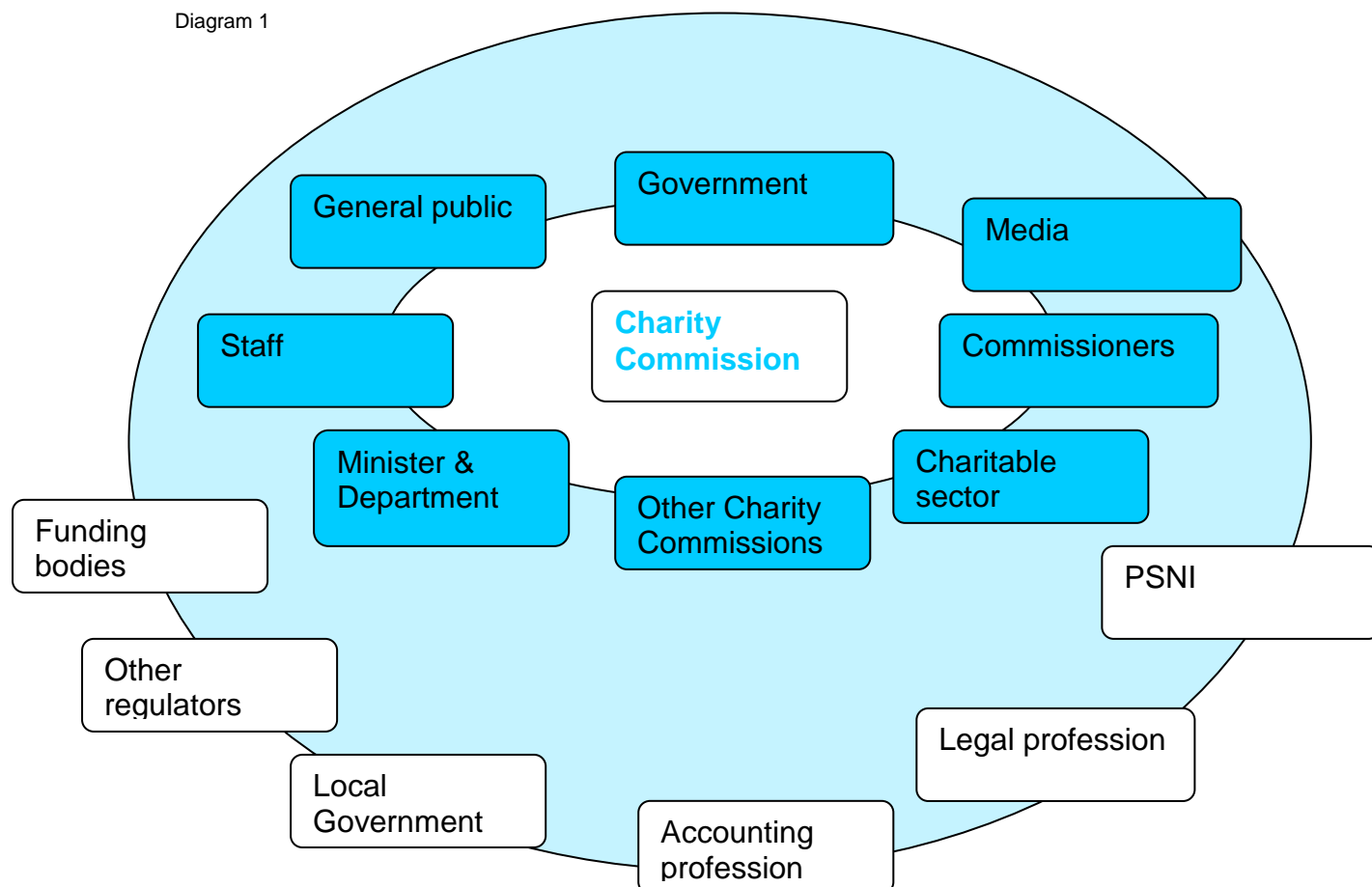
The Act requires us to produce a Publication Scheme. By 'publication' we mean information that is available to the public in a variety of formats, for example, reports on paper or web pages. We have developed and published a Publication Scheme, which will be progressed within the lifetime of this Corporate Plan.

## 5. Strategic context

### Operating environment

There are many people and organisations that interact within the Charity Commission's operating environment. These are summarised in Diagram 1 below:

Diagram 1



Since it was established in June 2009, the Commission has met with many groups and individuals to build an understanding of the current environment and consider stakeholders' needs and expectations.

### Charity context

Charities make a significant contribution to civic life in Northern Ireland. They improve society by providing diverse activities and services that range, for example, from small community groups working at grass roots level to umbrella bodies, from arts and cultural organisations to groups providing health and environmental services.

The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) carries out an analysis of the voluntary and community sector on an annual basis. *State of the Sector VI* indicates a sector with the following key features:

- 4,836 organisations.

- Income: £741.9 million.
- Expenditure: £719.6 million.
- Direct departmental expenditure: £254 million
- Assets: £863.8 million.
- Workforce: 27,773.
- Volunteers: 189,362.

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) detail that almost 7,000 organisations from Northern Ireland are accepted as such for tax purposes. The definitive number of Northern Ireland charities will be established when registration is commenced and the Commission introduces the Register of Charities.

The Commission, through its registration and monitoring and compliance activities, will build a clear picture of the sector's diversity, size, location, beneficiaries, activities and income levels, as well as the longer term impact of regulation on public confidence.

While it is important for us to have access to the information that we are collecting, it is equally important to make the information publicly available, in keeping with our objective of enhancing the accountability of charities to donors, beneficiaries and the public. Information will be made available on our website when we collect and collate it and we will encourage the public to make use of it. We will also devise means by which the combined information that we collect can be used for research and information purposes.

Since our establishment, we have become increasingly aware that charities are coming under more pressure to improve their efficiency and accountability, deliver services to high standards and demonstrate that they are providing value for money. We have an important role to educate and assist charities, and are mindful of the high level of charity volunteering, in matters of governance and management. We will do this ourselves but also in partnership with other agencies, both government and non-government, that have skills and resources in this area.

## **The public**

The public is an important stakeholder in the charitable sector. Members of the public receive services and provide funds, support and resources (including volunteering). The public do not currently have access to information about charities and those charities that did not want to divulge financial information had no requirement to do so. One of the Commission's key functions is to make information about charities available to the public through the development of a Register of Charities. Information required for registration (such as trustee details) and annual return information (including annual accounts), will be made available via the Commission's online Register of Charities. The Register will have a search facility that will enable the public to search for information about registered charities using a number of search criteria.

We believe that the availability of information on the Register of Charities will enable the public to develop a greater degree of understanding about

the charities with which they interact, and will assist with the development of trust and confidence in the sector.

## **The Government**

The NI Executive's Programme for Government 2011-2015 sets priorities as, "Building a strong and shared community" alongside "Delivering high quality and efficient public services". As a non-Departmental Public Body, our role encompasses delivering these objectives.

Our status dictates that we operate independently and impartially while remaining accountable to the Minister for Social Development for our performance and use of public funds. The NDPB model allows us to work independently of government in our decision making but within the Department's broader strategy for charity law reform and regulation.

The Commission's strategic direction will therefore also actively contribute to DSD's Corporate Plan objectives. Specifically, our statutory functions will assist the Department in its commitment to increase sustainability in the broad community sector.

Through the Programme for Government and DSD's commitments, government acknowledges the important economic and social contribution that the charitable sector makes to Northern Ireland society.

The Concordat between government and Northern Ireland's voluntary and community sector recognises the importance of a close working relationship between both parties in achieving positive social, economic, cultural, and environmental outcomes. Government also wants to be sure that public and private funds flowing into the sector are used appropriately and that they are used for the charitable purpose of the organisation.

Government has expressed a desire that government agencies coordinate their activities, wherever possible, to avoid duplication and minimise compliance costs to the sector. This extends to ensuring that the sector has access to appropriate advice and support concerning regulatory obligations. Information held on the Register of Charities will allow for much easier communication with the sector than has been previously possible.

## **Government agencies**

Many government agencies interact with charities. Charities can be recipients or providers of government services, providers of information, subjects of regulatory intervention or partners working in particular communities. We will work cooperatively with these agencies to ensure that the services available are well integrated and coordinated.

It is important for government agencies that charities are transparent, well managed and effective. They also need reliable data on the sector so that appropriate policy is developed. They will increasingly be looking to



the Commission to be a leading source of information and guidance on issues relating to the sector.

## **Financial**

The current economic difficulties and associated spending reviews will undoubtedly have an impact on the charitable sector in terms of its ability to deliver services and in the type of services it is required to provide to meet demands. Organisations will have to individually and collectively deal with the challenges a weak economic environment brings. These may include withdrawal of some services, a fall in income from the public sector and from the general public, and the governance challenges of managing staff in a downturn, which may include redundancies and wage reductions. Nevertheless it is certain that the sector will continue to play a vital role in Northern Ireland society.

## **Regulation**

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland aims to take a modern, risk-based approach to regulation. We intend to minimise the burden of regulation on charities, wherever possible, whilst still ensuring that the law is fully implemented. We will combine this with a 'smart' approach to monitoring and compliance to encourage maximum compliance with the most cost-effective use of our own resources.

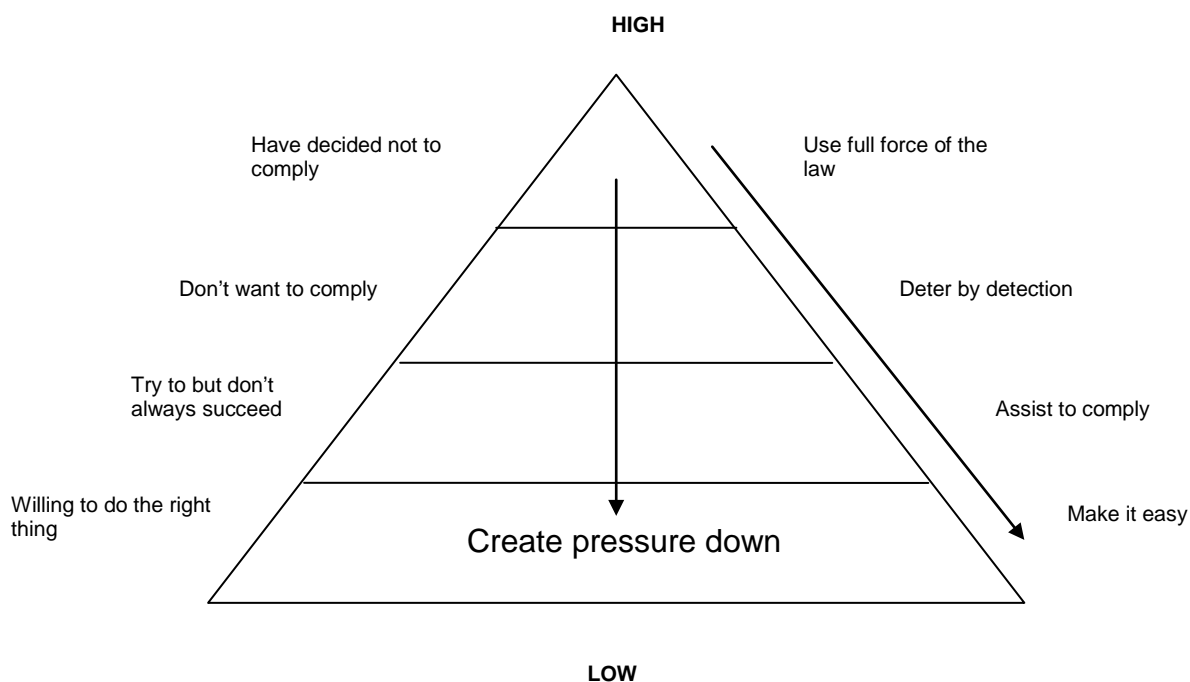
Proportionality and informed assessment of risk will underpin our approach to carrying out our work. Where we judge risks to be low we will apply lighter touch regulation and will make advice and guidance widely available through our website to enable charities dealing with common, low-risk issues to improve their own practice. Where risks are high, we will ensure robust monitoring and investigation and provide targeted advice and guidance as required.

We will encourage maximum compliance by seeking to create the right incentives for charities to comply with the law. We will support high levels of compliance amongst those charities which are willing and monitor overall compliance in a cost-effective way. This multi-tiered approach is reflected in the 'regulatory pyramid'<sup>1</sup> diagram 2 shown below.

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<sup>1</sup> Sparrow, Malcolm (2000) *The Regulatory Craft: Controlling Risks, Solving Problems and Managing Compliance*.  
Brookings Institution Press

Diagram 2



At the most basic level of promoting compliance we will enable those willing to comply to do so by providing the appropriate systems and information. At the next level (deter by detection) we will review compliance by sampling the annual monitoring returns of charities, enabling us to look closely at their activities, governance and finances.

At the peak of the pyramid we will use our legal powers to institute inquiries and take remedial action where necessary. We will co-operate with other agencies in doing so, where relevant, to ensure effective use of resources.

### **Public body**

The Commission has in place with its sponsor department, a MSFM that explains the broad framework within which the Commission will operate. The Commission works with DSD's Voluntary and Community Unit, which has responsibility for the overall policy framework and for legislative implementation in this area in Northern Ireland. During the period of this Corporate Plan, we expect the remainder of the 2008 Act to be implemented, requiring drafting, consultation and the development of new procedures as remaining regulations are introduced.

As a public body we also have a general responsibility to take account of relevant policy priorities of the Northern Ireland Executive, whilst maintaining our operating independence and delivering best value to the public.

Key developments which are particularly relevant to us as a public body include:

- Expectations on all public bodies to put arrangements in place that support best value. This will involve continuous performance improvement and maximising the value for money of all our activities.
- The likelihood of constraints on available funding for public services in Northern Ireland influencing the scale and scope of our activities. This will however:
  - encourage us in our existing commitment to create strong links and partnerships with umbrella bodies and other regulators to maximise delivery of services to the charitable sector;
  - challenge us to find innovative ways of reaching charities and our other stakeholders, and;
  - reinforce our drive to develop a risk-based approach to regulation.

## 6. Corporate objectives

In order to deliver our vision of '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 and advisory role,' we have detailed our corporate objectives as part of the Commission's operational planning arrangements.

These set out what we are trying to achieve by way of impact, how we will do it, when we will take action to deliver the objective, how we might measure success and who is responsible.

Strategic Aim	Corporate Objective
<b>Public confidence objective:</b> to increase public trust and confidence in charities.	1.1 To communicate the work of the Commission effectively. 1.2 To implement the relevant sections of the Charities Act (NI) 2008. 1.3 To review the impact of the Charities Act (NI) 2008 as it is implemented.
<b>Public benefit objective:</b> to promote awareness and understanding of the operation of the public benefit requirement.	2.1 To develop a range of Public Benefit guidance and advice. 2.2 To review the effectiveness of guidance and advice produced. 2.3 To monitor awareness of the public benefit requirement.
<b>Compliance objective:</b> to promote compliance by charity trustees with their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the administration of their charities.	3.1 To establish a compliance monitoring programme. 3.2 To investigate alleged charity misconduct and mismanagement. 3.3 To respond to Charity Tribunal decisions. 3.4 To develop and maintain partnerships with key stakeholder bodies. 3.5 To assist charity trustees in the effective control and management of charities.
<b>Charitable resources objective:</b> to promote the effective use of charitable resources.	4.1 To provide access to a range of information on effective use of resources.
<b>Accountability objective:</b> to enhance the accountability of charities to donors,	5.1 To develop and maintain a register of charities. 5.2 To implement accounting regulations for Northern Ireland charities. 5.3 To hold and display other information relevant to charities.

beneficiaries and the public.	
<b>Delivery objective:</b> to manage the Commission as an effective and efficient non departmental public body	<p><b>6.1</b> To maintain a flexible, responsive organisational structure and appropriate governance and management arrangements.</p> <p><b>6.2</b> To ensure staff are valued, recognised and appropriately skilled to meet business needs.</p> <p><b>6.3</b> To prioritise available resources to ensure appropriate systems and resources are in place to enable effective operation.</p>

**Strategic Aim 1****Public confidence**

To increase public trust and confidence in charities.

What we aim to do	Actions we will carry out	When we plan to do it			How we will measure success	Who is responsible
		2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016		
1.1 Communicate the work of the Commission effectively.	a) Communicate with a range of stakeholders using the methods identified in the Commission's communications strategy.	√	√	√	Report against performance measures in the annual communications plan and yearly planner.	Board CEO Head of Charity Services (HoCS) Head of Compliance & Enquiries (HoC&E) Head of Corporate Services (HoCoS)
	b) Develop and manage the website as the primary means of communication with the public and other stakeholders.	√	√	√	Report web traffic and timeliness of updates to the website as part of the communications plan.	CO
	c) Make accessible via the web, key minutes and governance documents to ensure transparency and accountability.	√	√	√	Regular review of website to ensure relevant and up-to-date and ensure documents are available within five working days.	CO
	d) Implement and monitor the operation of the participation strategy.	√	√	√	Report on the effectiveness of the operation of the participation strategy through post-consultation evaluations.	HoCS

<b>Strategic Aim 1</b>						
<b>Public confidence</b>						
To increase public trust and confidence in charities.						
<b>What we aim to do</b>	<b>Actions we will carry out</b>	<b>When we plan to do it</b>			<b>How we will measure success</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>
		<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>		
1.2 Implement the relevant sections of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.	a) Develop and review relevant programmes, processes and procedures to deliver sections of the Act as they are commenced.	√	√	√	Programmes, processes and procedures will be in place. Staff will be trained and systems operational by the date of each commencement.	HoCS HoCoS HoC&E
	b) Review internal procedures and processes as the Act is implemented.	√	√	√	Processes will be reviewed and amended as required within 24 months of implementation.	HoCS
1.3 Review the impact of the Charities Act (NI) 2008 as it is implemented.	a) Develop a research agenda incorporating impact measurement.	√			A research strategy will be produced.	HoCS PM
	b) Implement a research agenda and report on findings and impact measurement.	√	√	√	Research findings published citing prevalence of impacts. Report overall level of public trust and confidence in charities.	HoCS PM

<b>Strategic Aim 2</b>						
<b>Public benefit</b>						
To promote awareness and understanding of the operation of the public benefit requirement.						
<b>What we aim to do</b>	<b>Actions we will carry out</b>	<b>When we plan to do it</b>			<b>How we will measure success</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>
		<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>		
2.1 Develop a range of Public Benefit guidance and advice.	a) Consult on and publish public benefit guidance.	√			Public benefit guidance available and published on website.	HoCS
	b) Disseminate information and advice on the public benefit requirement.	√	√	√	A minimum of five sectoral-based presentations/events will be held alongside production of website publications. 80% of public benefit general enquiries will be responded to within five working days.	HoCS
2.2 Review the effectiveness of guidance and advice produced.	a) Monitor the introduction and usage of the public benefit guidance and review after an appropriate period.	√	√	√	Review the information provided in registration applications with regard to public benefit to identify issues. Report on results of survey to applicants to establish usefulness of the guidance (Target 75% satisfaction with public benefit guidance).	HoCS
2.3 Monitor awareness of the public benefit requirement.	a) Establish a baseline of trustee understanding and awareness of public benefit requirement through the use of surveys.		√		Report on the results of a survey to establish baseline knowledge of trustees.	HoCS



**Strategic Aim 3  
Compliance**

To promote compliance by charity trustees with their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the administration of their charities.

What we aim to do	Actions we will carry out	When we plan to do it			How we will measure success	Who is responsible
		2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016		
3.1 Establish a compliance monitoring programme for registered charities.	a) Develop an interim monitoring programme for registered charities prior to accounting regulations being in place.	√			Board agreement of interim policy approach based on the fullest use of statutory powers to ensure trustees provide information that can be made publically available to demonstrate the administration of charities.	HoC&E
	b) Produce guidance and interim annual return regulations.	√			Range of consultation events involving stakeholders. Guidance will be available and published on the website.	HoC&E
	c) Implement interim compliance monitoring systems.	√	√	√	Interim processes and procedures will be in place. Staff will be trained and systems operational.	HoC&E
	d) Develop a full compliance monitoring programme.		√	√	Agreement of a full risk based monitoring approach. Guidance will be available and published on the website.	HoC&E
	e) Prepare for implement of full compliance monitoring.		√	√	Processes and procedures developed to monitor compliance with annual reporting and accounting regulations.	HoC&E

**Strategic Aim 3  
Compliance**

To promote compliance by charity trustees with their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the administration of their charities.

What we aim to do	Actions we will carry out	When we plan to do it			How we will measure success	Who is responsible
		2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016		
3.2 Investigate alleged charity misconduct and mismanagement in charities. .	a) Respond to problems identified either through compliance work or concerns.	√	√	√	Deal with 130 investigations per year with 70% cases progressed to conclusion within nine months.	HoC&E
	b) Act on findings and take remedial action as appropriate.	√	√	√	Communicate required action to charities within thirty working days of final risk assessment.	HoC&E
	c) Share lessons arising from investigations and compliance work to benefit the more effective operation of charities.	√	√	√	At least two thematic reports on concerns published and four investigation reports per annum.	HoC&E
3.3 Respond to Charity Tribunal decisions.	a) Respond within the prescribed time scale if a challenge is appropriate or incorporate implications of decisions into existing processes.	√	√	√	Implications incorporated into existing processes within a reasonable time period and challenges made within statutory time limits.	HoC&E

**Strategic Aim 3  
Compliance**

To promote compliance by charity trustees with their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the administration of their charities.

What we aim to do	Actions we will carry out	When we plan to do it			How we will measure success	Who is responsible
		2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016		
3.4 Develop and maintain partnerships with key stakeholder bodies.	a) Maintain regular liaison with key stakeholders, for example, other statutory bodies and charity sector intermediaries.	√	√	√	The effectiveness of our consultation and participation activities will be evaluated in line with our Participation Strategy.	CEO
	b) Develop and review Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with relevant key stakeholders.	√	√	√	MOUs will be in place and subject to review with twenty-four months of establishment. Prioritise and develop a further five MOUs.	CEO
3.5 To assist charity trustees in the effective control and management of charities.	a) Develop guidance for trustees on exercising control and management of a charity.	√	√	√	Guidance will be published and available for use.	HoCS

<b>Strategic Aim 4</b>						
<b>Charitable resources</b>						
To promote the effective use of charitable resources.						
<b>What we aim to do</b>	<b>Actions we will carry out</b>	<b>When we plan to do it</b>			<b>How we will measure success</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>
		<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>		
4.1 Provide access to a range of information on effective use of resources.	a) Develop and publish a range of advice and information relevant to the use of resources.	√	√	√	39 pieces of guidance information and advice will have been developed and published and be publicly available for use as per our policy development plan. 80% of general enquiries responded to within five working days.	HoCS HoCoS HoE&C
	b) Provide links and sign post to other helper organisations and sources of information.	√	√	√	Links will be available on our website and CCNI will have sign posted organisations to other helper agencies and sources of information. Responses to general enquiries will be analysed.	HoCoS

<b>Strategic Aim 5</b>						
<b>Accountability</b>						
To enhance the accountability of charities to donors, beneficiaries and the public.						
<b>What we aim to do</b>	<b>Actions we will carry out</b>	<b>When we plan to do it</b>			<b>How we will measure success</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>
		<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>		
5.1 Develop and maintain a register of charities.	(a) Implement the Registration Programme.	√	√	√	Registration programme will be open, applications received and processed through to decision. Registrations (770 year 1, 4,139 year 2, 9,336 by end year 3) will be progressed in the lifetime of this plan.	HoCS
	(b) Monitor and review the Registration Programme.		√	√	Review completed and initial lessons learned implemented.	HoCS
	(c) Make publically available an up-to-date register of charities on the website.	√	√	√	The register will be available online permanently.	HoCoS
	(d) Make publically available via the register, information on charities' compliance with the requirements of the legislation to enhance accountability.			√	Registered charity information will be available on the website permanently.	HoCoS

**Strategic Aim 5  
Accountability**

To enhance the accountability of charities to donors, beneficiaries and the public.

What we aim to do	Actions we will carry out	When we plan to do it			How we will measure success	Who is responsible
		2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016		
5.2 Implement accounting regulations for Northern Ireland charities.	(a) Work with Charity SORP committee on development of charity accounting formats.	√			Attendance at Charity SORP committee and consultation events. Issues taken forward with DSD.	HoC&E
	(b) Work jointly with DSD on development of NI charity accounting regulations.	√	√		Plans for a joint public consultation with DSD	HoC&E
	(c) Develop and publish guidance.		√	√	Guidance will have been developed and published after the outcome of the consultation is known.	HoC&E
	(d) Incorporate accounting requirements into interim annual monitoring.			√	Adherence to the accounting regulations will form part of the monitoring programme.	HoC&E
5.3 Hold and display other information relevant to charities.	a) Develop registers and relevant lists of charity information as required by the Act.		√	√	Production and maintenance of a range of information, eg a register of mergers, as relevant sections of the Act are commenced.	HoC&E

## Strategic Aim 6

### Delivery

To manage the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland as an effective and efficient non-departmental public body.

What we aim to do	Actions we will carry out	When we plan to do it			How we will measure success	Who is responsible
		2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016		
6.1 Maintain a flexible, responsive organisational structure and appropriate governance and management arrangements.	(a) Establish implement and review robust operational structures and processes to deliver our services.	√	√	√	All procedures reviewed within twenty four months, and implementation will be reviewed via assurance checks.	CEO HoCS HoCoS HOC&E
	(b) Implement, review and maintain robust internal corporate processes to ensure we are an effective and accountable organisation.	√	√	√	Corporate processes are in place and being followed as demonstrated by annual external and internal audits.	HoCoS
	(c) Continue to develop and maintain appropriate Corporate Governance structures.	√	√	√	Develop governance manual and review annually, MSFM compliance is reviewed twice yearly.	CEO
	(d) Maintain robust business planning and reporting mechanisms.	√	√	√	Business planning and reporting is appropriate and timely. 90 % overall business plan measures and targets achieved.	HoCoS
	(e) Maintain strong working relationships with sponsor department.	√	√	√	Meetings held with the sponsor department on a regular basis and further liaison as required.	Board CEO

**Strategic Aim 6****Delivery**

To manage the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland as an effective and efficient non-departmental public body.

What we aim to do	Actions we will carry out	When we plan to do it			How we will measure success	Who is responsible
		2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016		
6.2 Ensure staff are valued, recognised and appropriately skilled to meet business needs.	(a) Implement and review HR policies and procedures. to ensure compliance with current legislation and practice.	√	√		HR policies are in place, being followed and meeting needs as evidenced by quarterly assurance checks. Staff absence <3%.	HoCoS
	b) Deliver the Equality Scheme and Action Plan commitment to equality and good relations in the workplace and in service delivery.	√	√	√	Policies in place, and monitored, commitment evident.	Board All staff
	(c) Meet identified skills needs through appropriate training for staff and Commissioners.	√	√	√	Training and learning needs audit completed and training identified/delivered within budget.	HoCoS



**Strategic Aim 6****Delivery**

To manage the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland as an effective and efficient non-departmental public body.

What we aim to do	Actions we will carry out	When we plan to do it			How we will measure success	Who is responsible
		2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016		
6.3 Prioritise available resources to ensure appropriate systems and resources are in place to enable effective operation	a) Integrated IT system (InITs) developed and implemented.	√	√		Work orders agreed and build underway.	HoCoS
	b) Manage strategic development and delivery of IT systems.	√	√	√	Implement IT review recommendations.	HoCoS
	c) Maintain robust financial forecasting and budgeting processes.	√	√	√	Forecasting and budgeting processes in place and meeting needs. Budget spend within 1% variance at year end.	HoCoS
	d) Review staffing structure.		√		Report produced and changes implemented.	CEX HoCoS
	e) Review premises to ensure continuing to meet needs	√			Review completed prior to break lease point and recommendations brought forward.	HoCoS

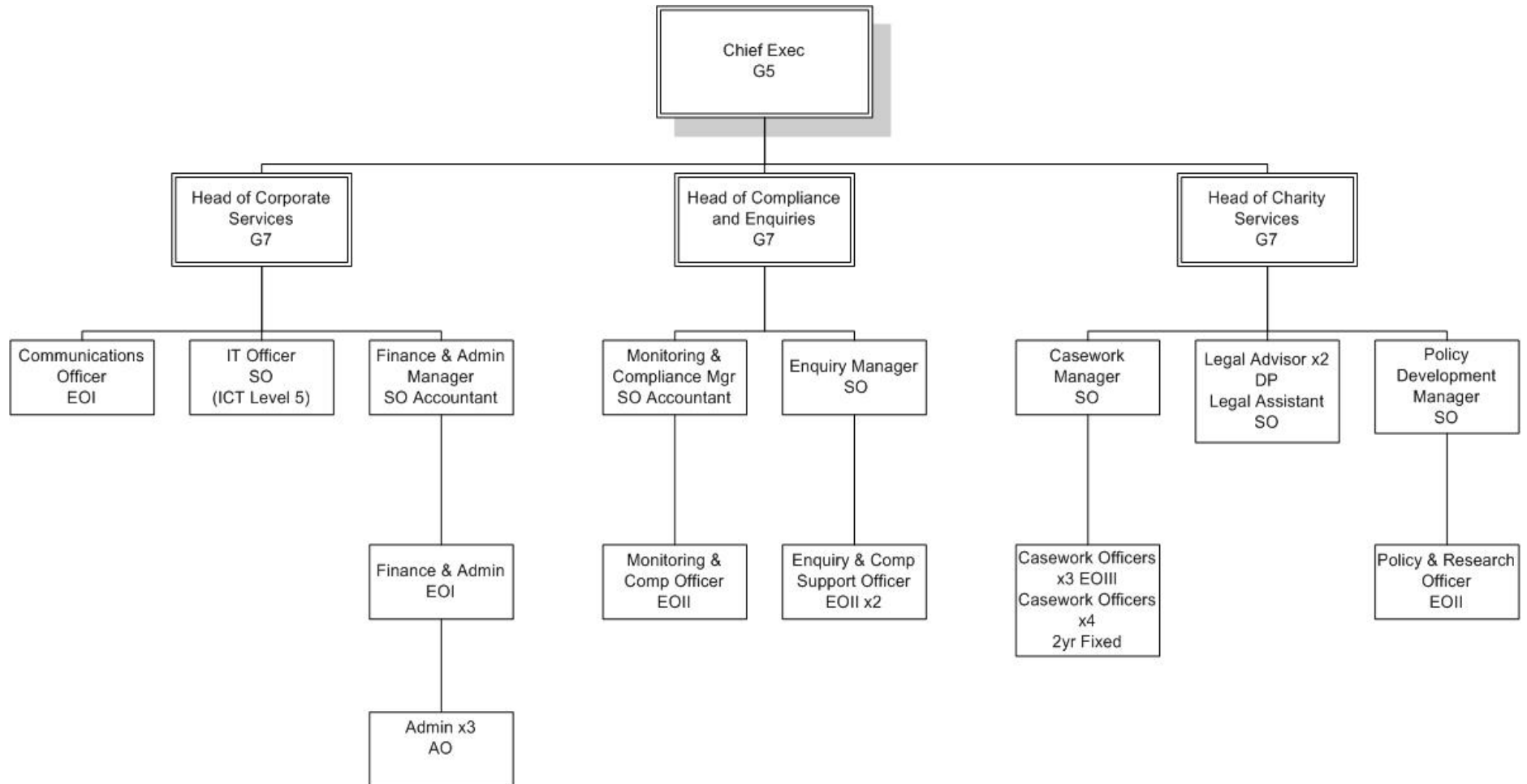
## 7. Resources

Source of income: 100% Grant in Aid from the Department for Social Development

### Draft Budget

Item	2012/13 Baseline	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Commissioners Remuneration	£20,700	£20,700	£20,700	£20,700
Staffing Costs	£682,598	£905,187	£1,138,268	£1,076,485
Staff/Commissioner Non-Remuneration Costs	£33,000	£60,375	£55,438	£55,938
IT Costs	£100,200	£156,950	£157,000	£157,000
Premises Costs	£60,698	£70,949	£72,911	£75,520
General Running Costs	£23,000	£40,250	£42,969	£45,688
Programme Delivery Costs	£65,000	£163,500	£159,500	£160,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE COSTS</b>	<b>£985,196</b>	<b>£1,417,911</b>	<b>£1,646,7865</b>	<b>£1,591,3310</b>
<b>Capital Costs</b>				
<b>Total Capital Costs</b>	£12,000	£289,000	£100,000	£0
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>£997,196</b>	<b>£1,706,911</b>	<b>£1,746,786</b>	<b>£1,591,331</b>

## Staff Structure





Published: June 2013

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) is the new regulator of charities in Northern Ireland. It is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Social Development.

CCNI's vision is to create

**'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 and advisory role'.**

Further information about CCNI's activities is available from:

[www.charitycommissionni.org.uk](http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk)

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