



NORTHERN
IRELAND
HUMAN
RIGHTS
COMMISSION



Annual Report and Accounts 2011–2012



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Annual Report and Accounts 2011–12

Annual report presented to Parliament pursuant to
paragraph 5(2) of Schedule 7 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998
and Accounts presented to Parliament pursuant to
paragraph 7(3)(b) of Schedule 7 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

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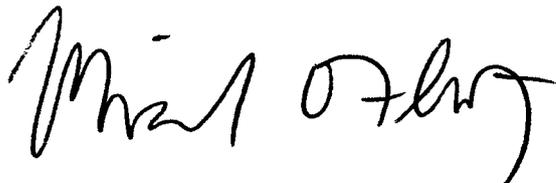
Rt Hon Theresa Villiers MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
Northern Ireland
BT4 3SH

Dear Secretary of State

I have pleasure in submitting to you, as required by paragraph 5(1) of Schedule 7 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the thirteenth Annual Report of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. It shows how the Commission has performed its functions during the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

The Annual Report includes the Commission's financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2012, which have been prepared in accordance with Paragraph 7 of Schedule 7 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and which were approved and certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General on 19 June 2013.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael O'Flaherty', written in a cursive style.

Professor Michael O'Flaherty
Chief Commissioner

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It is available for download at www.nihrc.org.

Chief Commissioner's Foreword

As the recently appointed Chief Commissioner, I have the honour to deliver the Foreword to the Annual Report for 2011-2012 of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. At the outset I express appreciation to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for the trust he has invested in me and in the new team of Commissioners. I also observe that this report covers a period that includes some 5 months during which the Commission was led by my predecessor, Professor Monica McWilliams and the then team of Commissioners. I express my appreciation to them for their work. I also acknowledge a debt of gratitude to Professor McWilliams for the gracious manner in which she welcomed me and ensured a smooth hand-over of responsibilities.

My colleague Commissioners and I embark on our responsibilities with a strong awareness of the challenges that confront us. There is no country on earth that is without serious human rights difficulties. Northern Ireland is not alone in facing acute human rights threats associated with the global economic down-turn. Nor is the jurisdiction unique in having to address the complex issues of the protection of the range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that beset all jurisdictions across Europe and elsewhere. Northern Ireland also must confront the very specific human rights dimensions of its continuing emergence from the long conflict. It is incumbent on the Commission to address all dimensions of the human rights situation.

As the Commission carries out its duties and as it plans for the future it keeps in mind three key considerations:

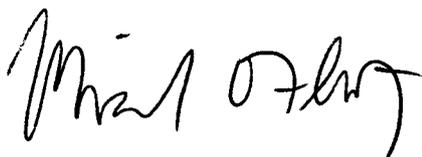
- all of our work is on the basis of the human rights obligations entered into by the United Kingdom and to be found in the relevant European and United Nations treaties. On this basis our every action must be grounded in the international legal framework that is applicable for Northern Ireland;
- as we make the difficult choices regarding what to prioritise we will always do so on the basis of how best to protect the human rights of the most vulnerable in society. In other words, our primary clients must always be the most overlooked and powerless of our fellow residents of Northern Ireland; and
- third, we are not a new institution. The Human Rights Commission has been in existence for over 12 years. With the assistance of our excellent staff we will maintain continuity in our work.

On the basis of these considerations, and taking account of ongoing consultation with community groups and other stakeholders across Northern Ireland, the Commission is implementing a Business Plan that it has inherited with particular attention to:

- the impact of the economic situation for the enjoyment of human rights – reflected, for instance, in our commentary on the Programme for Government, our Advices on relevant legislation and our engagement concerning welfare reform;
- addressing the situation of the most vulnerable – evidenced, for instance by the publication of the investigation of the human rights situation of older persons in nursing homes, as well as our continued attention to the human rights of persons held in detention;

- continued work to deepen the constitutional framework for human rights protection, including by means of ongoing advocacy for action by political leaders to negotiate and adopt a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland;
- supporting work to address Northern Ireland's past – to put in place the outstanding elements of a framework for “transitional justice” to include accountability to victims for the human rights abuses they have experienced;
- contributing to the nurturing of a culture of human rights in our society and its governance structures – for instance through our education and training work and the publication of an annual report on human rights in Northern Ireland.

To be successful in its work, the Commission requires the continued collaboration and partnership of so many actors in Northern Ireland society. It should and must work closely with the Executive, the Assembly, local government, the judiciary, the public service, the police, national government, faith communities, the voluntary sector and civil society. Together we can make a difference. Together we can make Northern Ireland a society that, above all else, cherishes the human rights of its people.



Michael O'Flaherty
Chief Commissioner

Management Commentary

Introduction

I am pleased to report on the performance of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission during this significant year and to acknowledge the work of our staff in producing this report.

The Commission was established as a result of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement 1998 and has been in operation since 1 March 1999, under its governing legislation, the Northern Ireland Act 1998, amended by the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007. We are a non-departmental public body with grant-in-aid provided by government through the Northern Ireland Office, and reporting to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. This relationship was unaffected by the devolution, from 12 April 2010, of policing and justice from the UK Parliament to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Commission's role is to promote awareness of the importance of human rights, to review law and practice and to advise government on what steps need to be taken to fully protect human rights in Northern Ireland. We base our work on international human rights standards, including those of the United Nations (UN) and the Council of Europe. The Commission, in line with the 'Paris Principles' guidance of 1993, has 'A' status recognition at the UN as a national human rights institution. This gives us special access to the Human Rights Council, treaty bodies and other organisations (further information on the 'Paris Principles' is available at: www.ohchr.org/english/law/parisprinciples).

What we do

The primary role of the Commission is to protect and promote the human rights of everyone in Northern Ireland. We do this through 4 key statutory functions:

- legal assistance and strategic litigation
- policy and legislative scrutiny (including Treaty monitoring)
- investigations
- education

Powers and duties

The Commission's powers and duties are derived from sections 69 and 70 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and sections 14 to 16 of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007. Under the 1998 Act as amended, the Commission has the following duties:

- to keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness in Northern Ireland of law and practice relating to the protection of human rights
- to advise the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Executive Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly of legislative and other measures which ought to be taken to protect human rights
- to advise the Northern Ireland Assembly whether proposed legislation is compatible with human rights standards
- to promote understanding and awareness of the importance of human rights in Northern Ireland by, for example, undertaking or commissioning or otherwise assisting research and educational activities, and
- to provide advice to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on the scope for defining, in Westminster legislation, rights supplementary to those in the European Convention on Human Rights.

In addition, under sections 69 and 70 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Commission has the following powers:

- to give assistance to individuals who apply to it for help in relation to proceedings involving law or practice concerning the protection of human rights
- to bring proceedings involving law or practice concerning the protection of human rights
- to conduct such investigations as it considers necessary or expedient for the purpose of exercising its other functions, and
- to publish its advice and the outcome of its research and investigations.

The Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 (sections 14 to 16 amended sections 69 and 71 of the 1998 Act) gives the Commission the following powers, with caveats:

- to institute, or intervene in, legal proceedings concerning human rights where it need not be a victim or potential victim of the unlawful act to which the proceedings relate
- to require a person to provide information and documents in their possession, and to give oral evidence, in respect of an investigation, and
- to enter a specified place of detention in Northern Ireland, in respect of an investigation.

Vision

Our vision is to 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

Our mission is to promote awareness of the importance of human rights, to review existing law, policy and practice and to advise government on what steps need to be taken to fully protect human rights in Northern Ireland.

Values

The Commission is committed to carrying out its work in accordance with the following values:

- **independence** – we are accountable for our funding but independent from any outside influence;
- **participation** – we work to ensure that individuals and groups feel that the Commission is their Commission and to avail of people's expertise and share good practice in all areas of our work;
- **accessibility** – we will ensure that our services are accessible to all and take account of the views expressed to us on our work. Our decisions will be clearly communicated and open to public scrutiny. We will strive to ensure that all our public events are accessible and our publications are as easy to understand as possible;
- **fairness** – we will conduct our work and build relationships with stakeholders in a professional, objective, and fair manner. We will be objective when assessing evidence, and use internationally accepted rules and

principles on human rights as our baseline when doing so;

- **effectiveness** – we will deliver an efficient and effective service to the people of Northern Ireland and demonstrate value for money;
- **sustainability** – we are committed to the effective protection of the environment, including the prudent use of natural resources.

Strategic aims

The Commission’s aims and objectives for the period ending March 2012, as set out in its Strategic Plan for 2011-13, and operationalised through annual business plan, were as follows:

- building and embedding a human rights culture
- challenging and seeking to prevent human rights violations
- communicating and promoting human rights in an accessible way, and
- ensuring organisational effectiveness and efficiency.

Achievement of aims and objectives in 2011-12

This has been an extremely productive year for the Commission and one of real change.

In March 2012 we were awarded, by way of reaccreditation ‘A’ status as a national human rights institution through the UN International Co-ordinating Committee in Geneva. In recognition of the international reputation of the organisation among peers, the Euro Group of national human rights institutions appointed the Commission to Chair a new accreditation group for Europe to support existing or new national human rights institutions.

The Commission has developed opportunities in year to host international experts in Northern Ireland. We have welcomed the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights Ms Kwang and the UN European representative Dr Jareb as well as Thomas Hammarberg the Commissioner for Human Rights from the Council of Europe, who visited traveller sites in Northern Ireland with the Commission in December 2011.

The Commission’s investigation into Nursing Homes, *In Defence of Dignity*, received extensive coverage in the media which we hope will lead to much greater consideration of the important issue in the future. Follow up work on previous investigations into prisons, immigration, mental health and access to services for migrants continued. Significant numbers of advices were submitted to government on issues including the Review of Northern Ireland Prisons, consultation on mental health services and Access to Justice. A further edition of the Commission’s Migrant workers’ handbook produced in

collaboration with the Law Centre was launched during the year.

The Commission also provided advice to government and submitted a parallel report to the UN ahead of the UK's examination in Geneva for the Universal Periodic Review in 2012.

During the year the Commission secured external funding to support the development of human rights training for the Northern Ireland Civil Service. The project was initiated during the year and will be developed and implemented in co-operation with the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister and the Centre for Applied Learning over the next 3 years. The Commission continued to deliver its range of training packages which included support for personnel entering social work, the legal profession and community groups.

As always co-operation with other national human rights institutions, equality bodies and Ombudsmen was a key feature of our work. We held joint meetings with the Scottish Human Rights Commission Irish Human Rights Commission and Equality and Human Rights Commission to continue operating our Memorandum of Understanding. This work assisted us in co-ordinating responses to international treaty monitoring and the submission in 2012 to the Universal Periodic Review.

The Commission appeared on two occasions this year before the Joint Committee on Human Rights at Westminster. In June 2011 evidence was given on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability on the subject of Article 19 (independent living). In December the new Chief Commissioner Professor Michael O'Flaherty presented to the Committee on

the work of the newly appointed Commission.

In partnership with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland we continued to develop during the year our role as the jointly appointed Independent Joint Mechanism in accordance with Article 33 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This work involved direct engagement with community and voluntary sector organisations raising awareness of the Convention and its application within the jurisdiction. A number of publications were produced and advice was provided to the Northern Ireland Executive concerning the development of its Disability Strategy and to the Office of Disability Issues on the proposed UK National Action Plan.

In accordance with our mandate under the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the Commission held two meetings with the Irish Human Rights Commission as a Joint Committee with specific focus on fulfilment of our obligation to provide advice on a proposed Charter of Rights for the island of Ireland. This task was completed in June 2011 and the document submitted to the Northern Ireland Assembly, UK government and the Government of Ireland.

Exercising our legal function, the Commission initiated in 2011 a judicial review challenging the bar which prevents unmarried and same sex couples in Northern Ireland being considered as adoptive parents. We also continued to support a judicial review which considered driver vehicle licensing law that the Commission believed to be discriminatory towards people who are insulin dependent.

Building on our work on the Interlaken Declaration, during the year the Commission collaborated with other European National Human Rights Institutions to provide advice on joint interventions before the European Court of Human Rights.

We continued as a Commission to support inquests raising important right to life issues in legacy cases, and these are due to be heard later, in 2012.

During the year we engaged on two occasions with the UK Commission on a Bill of Rights making written and oral submissions. These engagements were directed by and built upon our advice to government in 2008 which recommended that a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland should be legislated for in accordance with the provisions of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. The Commission has worked in partnership with the Scottish Human Rights Commission and the Equality and Human Rights Commission to develop a common position calling for the protection of the content and mechanisms of the Human Rights Act 1998.

Part of the change in the organisation this year has been the appointment of new Commissioners during the summer of 2011.

I wish to record my thanks to the outgoing Chief Commissioner Professor Monica McWilliams and to those Commissioners (listed hereafter) for their public service through this Commission, completed with such integrity and commitment.

I have been glad to welcome the new Chief Commissioner Professor Michael O' Flaherty and Commissioners. Almost immediately upon taking up office the new Commissioners commenced a series of visits throughout Northern Ireland where they met with community and voluntary groups, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and local Councils. These have proven invaluable as the Commission seeks to ensure support for the most vulnerable and marginalised members of society.

Our work on detention in the criminal justice system continued throughout the year with a visit to Maghaberry Prison taking place in the early autumn of 2011. The Commission also engaged with Department of Justice and inspection bodies, and continued to provide support for those organisations designated as National Preventative Mechanisms for the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

It has been a challenging year in which we have sought to improve the service provided to the people of Northern Ireland. The Commission has recognised a difficult economic situation, where a reduced budget has coincided with increase demand. As the numbers of vulnerable and marginalised in our society continue to rise we look forward to the year ahead and strive to provide all assistance possible to protect and promote human rights.

Funding and financial accountability

The Principal Accounting Officer (the Director General) of the Northern Ireland Office designates the Commission's Director as the Accounting Officer for the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

The Commission operates under a Management Statement and Financial Memorandum agreed with the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), and is financed by grant-in-aid, the allocation of which comes from the NIO Request for Resources 1.

The Commission's financial statements for 2011-12 have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 7(2)(a) of Schedule 7 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and in a form directed by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland with the approval of the Treasury. The financial statements demonstrate the resources we have used to deliver the Commission's objectives. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the guidance set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual for 2011-12 (available at: www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/frem).

The Commission spent its agreed resource allocation from the Northern Ireland Office for 2011-12, save for a modest underspend.

Other notable aspects of the Commission's expenditure during 2011-12, as compared to the previous year, detailed in Note 4 of the accounts, are highlighted below. Expenditure continued to be reduced across a range of programmes.

Expenditure was reduced in the following areas:

- consultancy - in accordance with guidance from central government reliance upon consultancy was reduced significantly and a greater emphasis placed upon optimising internal resource;
- insurance - as part of efficiency savings the Commission sought to reduce insurance necessary for external events;
- IT - the Commission has continued negotiations around service level agreement to ensure best quality service achieved at value for money;
- Legal casework non-recoverable - this reduction in expenditure is not a complete reflection of savings due to the fact that cases rarely begin and complete in-year. The Commission currently awaits judgments in a number of cases. However the Commission has sought to secure the most cost effective resolution of human rights disputes during this business year as part of efficiency plans;
- Light and heat - the Commission continues to secure savings by efficiency drives within the organisation;
- Printing, postage and stationery - further to significant savings made in the previous year the Commission continues to secure savings by efficiency drives within the organisation;
- Training and recruitment - the Commission has altered provision for training whilst ensuring the continued

development of staff resulting in a saving;

- Travel and subsistence - the Commission continues to review expenditure in this area in order to ensure value for money.

Expenditure increased in the following areas:

- Advertising, publicity and publications - the Commission published its investigation report in 2012. No investigation report was published the year before. In achieving the increased dissemination of materials in-year the Commission is therefore working more efficiently this year;
- Building maintenance and expenses - this relatively small increase is due to a number of unforeseen smaller necessities;
- Conferences and seminars - the Commission held a number of significant events with international experts and ran a series of engagements across the jurisdiction throughout the year. These, as indicated by the expenditure were achieved at very low cost;
- Investigations - finalisation and launch of a long-standing investigation resulted in increased expenditure as planned;
- professional fees – the notable increase is due in large part to costs associated with inherited staffing issues which the Commission has worked to bring to conclusion in the public interest;
- rentals under operating leases – these costs have increased although the Commission continues to make effort to secure value for money;

- telephone – although there was some increase in cost, the Commission has continued to keep costs below 2010 levels.

Commissioners and Management Team

The Commission is governed by its Commissioners. The following served as Commissioners during 2011-12:

- Professor Monica McWilliams (until 31 August 2011)
- Mr Tom Duncan (until 31 August 2011)
- Professor Colin Harvey (until 31 August 2011)
- Mr Alan Henry OBE (until 31 August 2011)
- Ms Ann Hope (until 31 August 2011)
- Ms Geraldine Rice MBE (until 31 August 2011)
- Professor Michael O’Flaherty (from 19 September 2011)
- Ms Christine Collins (from 1 September 2011)
- Mr John Corey (from 1 September 2011)
- Ms Grainia Long (from 1 September 2011)
- Mr Alan McBride (from 1 September 2011)
- Ms Marion Reynolds (from 1 September 2011)
- Mr Milton Kerr QPM (from 1 September 2011)
- Mr Paul Yam MBE (from 1 September 2011)

The Commission's Director is Mrs Virginia McVea. As Accounting Officer, the Director is responsible for maintaining a sound system of internal control. The Governance Statement sets out how this responsibility has been discharged in 2011-12.

Dr David Russell is the Deputy Director.

Details of remuneration can be found in the Remuneration Report.

A register of interests of the Commissioners and the Management Team can be found on our website: www.nihrc.org.

Corporate governance and risk management

The Commission is committed to ensuring a high standard of corporate governance. We have responsibility for defining strategy and determining resource allocations to ensure the delivery of the Commission's objectives. There is a corporate structure of committees that have clear terms of reference to support the Commission.

All Commissioners have received training in the role and responsibilities of board members of non-departmental public bodies, and induction into the work of the Commission.

The Commission has a risk management framework in place to identify risks and minimise as far as possible the likelihood of identified risks occurring and their impacts.

Following a reduction of grant-in-aid from the NIO the Commission began a process of staff restructuring. As a first stage of this process two posts within the Senior Management team were made redundant in 2011.

There were no complaints to the Parliamentary Ombudsman in 2011-12.

Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Commission's Audit and Risk Management Committee met four times during the year. The Committee is presided over by an external chairperson to ensure independence and access to a full range of financial and governance expertise.

The Audit and Risk Management Committee 2011/12 comprised of:

- Dr Bill Smith (Independent Chairperson)
- Mr Alan Henry OBE (until 31 August 2011)
- Ms Ann Hope (until 31 August 2011)
- Ms Geraldine Rice MBE (until 31 August 2011)
- Mr John Corey (from 1 September 2011)
- Ms Marion Reynolds (from 1 September 2011)
- Ms Christine Collins (from 1 December 2011)

The Director, Deputy Director, Finance Supervisor, Internal Auditor and External Auditor attend Audit and Risk Management Committee meetings.

The Audit and Risk Management Committee supports the Accounting Officer, and the Commission, by monitoring and reviewing the risk, control and governance systems, and the associated assurance processes. This is achieved by providing an independent perspective and through a process of constructive challenge. The Chairperson or nominated Committee member

reports on the activities of the Audit and Risk Management Committee at Commission meetings. Minutes of Audit and Risk Management Committee meetings are circulated to all Commissioners.

Auditors

The financial statements are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General. The audit fee for this year is £10,000 (2010-11: £8,000).

The Commission's internal audit is provided independently by ASM.

Sustainability

Environmental policy

Beyond engagement in UN initiatives the Commission continues to be committed to helping to protect the environment. We seek to do this through recycling paper and card, plastic bottles, and cans; using 100 per cent recycled paper; and encouraging staff to turn off lights and electronic equipment when not in use. The Commission's paper recycling programme has saved at least 18 trees from destruction in 2011-12. Energy saving activities help ensure that the Commission's light and heat costs are kept to a minimum.

Communities

The Commission seeks to support charitable work. We do this through the operation of a payroll-giving scheme which enables Commissioners and staff to make tax effective donations to charity. We also allow community and voluntary sector organisations to use our meeting facilities when possible, and we encourage social events for Commissioners and staff to raise funds for charity. In 2011-12 the Marie Curie Cancer Care was a chosen

charity and the Commission organised and hosted a coffee morning with other agencies which resulted in staff donations to the charity.

Suppliers

Where available, we buy from Fair Trade sources and the Commission is a member of Fairtrade Belfast.

Creditor payment, policy and performance

Monthly statistics submitted to the Northern Ireland Office highlight that the Commission has paid 367 invoices with a value of £439k (92 per cent of all undisputed invoices within five working days) (2010-11: 194 invoices with a value of £236k (89 per cent) of all undisputed invoices within five working days, since September 2010 when it was notified of the new Government target of paying 80 per cent of such invoices within this time period).

Research and development

The Commission engages in research and development work on human rights and the support of individual cases. Reports on this area of work can be assessed through our website: www.nihrc.org

Staff issues

We are committed to equality of opportunity and promoting good relations in accordance with our Equality Scheme, prepared in compliance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Commission therefore strives to promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the organisation as well as in the activities it conducts. We strive to comply fully with our statutory

obligations and we liaise closely with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to ensure we work together effectively.

We aim to be an exemplar employer in meeting the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and associated legislation, ensuring that disability is not a bar to recruitment or advancement. All disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for posts advertised at the Commission are guaranteed an interview.

Our work to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage participation by disabled people in public life are set out in our annual report to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, on the discharge of our duties under the Disability Discrimination Order 2006.

Learning and development

During the year we continued to give high priority to training and developing our entire staff to enhance their professionalism to support the Commission's objectives. Several staff completed Masters degree level programmes.

Employee consultation

Our Strategic Plan is implemented through our staff. We recognise that involving staff in planning and decision-making is essential in achieving business objectives. The Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) is the Commission's recognised trade union.

Health and safety

We recognise and accept our legal responsibilities in relation to the health, safety and welfare of our employees and for all people using our premises. We

comply with the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 and all other appropriate legislation.

The Commission's Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee (JNCC) with NIPSA, which meets quarterly, also functions as the Commission's Health and Safety Management Committee. Health and safety matters are a standing item on JNCC agendas.

Three members of staff have been trained in first aid, with one designated as the Health and Safety Officer.

The Commission uses an Employee Assistance Programme which provides 24-hour access to counselling and support services for Commissioners, staff and close family members.

Personal data

We are committed to safeguarding all personal data. Risks in this area are recorded in the Commission's risk register and the Audit and Risk Management Committee receives regular reports on activities to minimise the likelihood of the occurrence of these, and other, risks. No personal data-related incidents occurred during 2011-12.

Future developments

The Commission business plan for 2012-13 is available on our website at www.nihrc.org. This relates to the strategic plan for the period 2009-2013. The Commission has initiated development of a human rights based approach to strategic planning which is designed to be an international model of best practice for national human rights institutions and others.

The Commission has produced, in fulfilment of previous commitment to the NIO, proposals outlining management of 25% reduction in budget. The Commission prioritises public interest and value for money in corporate planning.

Days lost due to absence

The Commission encourages a culture where good attendance is expected and valued. However, we recognise that from time to time absences for medical reasons may be unavoidable. We aim to treat staff who are ill with sympathy and fairness and where possible provide them with support which will enable them to recover their health and attend work regularly. This approach is reflected in the Commission's Leave and Attendance Management Policy, which has been agreed with NIPSA.

Due to longstanding illness and redundancy processes in 2011-12, the percentage of working days lost was 10.8 per cent or an average of 29 days a year per employee (2010-11: 4.6 per cent and 10 days respectively).

Disclosure of audit information

As Accounting Officer, I confirm that I have taken all steps to ensure that I am aware of any relevant audit information and to ensure the Commission's auditors are aware of that information. As far as I am aware, there is no relevant information of which the Commission's auditors are unaware. The auditor has not received any remuneration for non-audit work.



Virginia McVea
Accounting Officer

Date: 14 June 2013

Remuneration Report

Remuneration policy

The remuneration of the Chief Commissioner and Commissioners is determined by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

The Director's post is graded within the Senior Civil Service (SCS). Pay and performance management arrangements for this post are in line with guidance issued by the Cabinet Office: Guidance for Approval of Senior Pay (applicable from June 2010) and HR Practitioners' Guide to SCS Reward, Benefits & Recruitment for 2010–11. Increases in the Director's base pay, and the level of performance-related bonuses, are linked to average increases for SCS staff within the Northern Ireland Office.

Previously, the remuneration of Commission staff was set within Northern Ireland Office pay structures. Following changes to these in April 2010, the Commission changed its pay arrangements to align them with those of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS), in common with its sister organisations. These pay arrangements continue to be performance-related. Performance is appraised by line managers in respect of achievement of agreed objectives.

The Chairperson of the Commission's Audit and Risk Management Committee was appointed through open competition from 1 March 2006. The Chairperson is remunerated at a rate of £320 per meeting (the Committee usually meets six times per year) and £320 per day (pro rata) for other work undertaken on behalf of, and at the request of, the Commission.

Contracts of employment

The Chief Commissioner and Commissioners are public appointments made by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in line with the requirements of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and guidelines laid down by the Commissioner for Public Appointments (www.ocpa.gov.uk). Appointments cannot be for more than five years at a time for the Chief Commissioner and for more than three years at a time for Commissioners. There is an option for a second term of appointment, at the Secretary of State's discretion. The Secretary of State will normally give three months' notice if an appointment is terminated.

Staff appointments are made in accordance with the Commission's recruitment and selection policy, which requires appointments to be made strictly on merit and through fair and open competition. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would normally result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

The Commission's age retirement policy enables members of staff who have reached the age at which they are entitled to draw their Commission pension (which for most staff is their sixtieth birthday) to choose the age at which they will retire.

Remuneration (audited information)

The following section provides details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Commissioners and the Commission's Management Team.

	2012 Remuneration £'000	2012 Benefit in Kind To nearest £100	2011 Remuneration £'000	2011 Benefit in Kind To nearest £100
Professor Monica McWilliams Chief Commissioner (until 31 August 2011)	30-35 ¹	0	75-80	0
Mr Thomas Duncan Commissioner (until 31 August 2011)	0-5 ²	100	5-10	600
Professor Colin Harvey Commissioner (until 31 August 2011)	0-5 ²	0	5-10	0
Mr Alan Henry OBE Commissioner (until 31 August 2011)	0-5 ²	0	5-10	400
Ms Ann Hope Commissioner (until 31 August 2011)	0-5 ²	0	5-10	100
Ms Geraldine Rice MBE Commissioner (until 31 August 2011)	0-5 ²	100	5-10	400
Professor Michael O'Flaherty Chief Commissioner (from 19 September 2011)	40-45 ³	0	0	0
Ms Christine Collins Commissioner (from 1 September 2011)	5-10 ⁴	300	0	0
Mr John Corey Commissioner (from 1 September 2011)	5-10 ⁴	0	0	0
Mr Milton Kerr QPM Commissioner (from 1 September 2011)	5-10 ⁴	700	0	0
Ms Grainia Long Commissioner (from 1 September 2011)	5-10 ⁴	0	0	0
Mr Alan McBride Commissioner (from 1 September 2011)	5-10 ⁴	0	0	0
Ms Marion Reynolds Commissioner (from 1 September 2011)	5-10 ⁴	100	0	0
Mr Paul Yam MBE Commissioner (from 1 September 2011)	5-10 ⁴	300	0	0
Dr Bill Smith Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee	0-5	0	10-15	200
Mrs Virginia McVea Director	55-60	0	0-5 ⁵	0
Mr Don Leeson Head of Corporate Services (until 15 July 2011)	20-25 ⁶	0	45-50	0
Mr Ciarán Ó Maoláin Head of Legal Services, Policy and Research (until 15 July 2011)	15-20 ⁷	0	45-50	0
Dr David Russell Deputy Director	45-50	0	40-45	0

1. Figure quoted is for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 August 2011. The full year equivalent is £75-80k.
2. Figure quoted is for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 August 2011. The full year equivalent is £5-10k.
3. Figure quoted is for the period 19 September 2011 to 31 March 2012. The full year equivalent is £75-80k.
4. Figure quoted is for the period 1 September 2011 to 31 March 2012. The full year equivalent is £5-10k.
5. Figure quoted is for the period 28 March 2011 to 31 March 2011. The full year equivalent is £55-60k.
6. Figure quoted is for the period 1 April 2011 to 15 July 2011. The full year equivalent is £45-50k. Redundancy payment of £35-40k and Payment in Lieu of Notice £5-10k excluded.
7. Figure quoted is for the period 1 April 2011 to 15 July 2011. The full year equivalent is £45-50k. Redundancy payment of £30-35k and Payment in Lieu of Notice £5-10k excluded.

	2012 £000	2011 £000
Band of highest paid employee's total remuneration:-		
- Including severance pay:	75-80	75-80
Median Total Remuneration:-		
- Including severance pay:	22	31
Ratio – Including severance pay	3.53	2.48

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid employee in their organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

The banded remuneration of the highest paid in the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in the financial year 2011-12 (including severance/redundancy pay) was £75-80k (2010-11 £75-80k). This was 3.53 times (2010-11 2.48) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £22k (2010-11 £31k).

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

The underlying ratio of the highest paid employee's remuneration compared with the median total remuneration, excluding the highest paid employee, has changed significantly compared with last year. This is due to an increase in the composition of the workforce in 2012 because of temporary contracts and the appointment of new Commissioners with having to take into account the outgoing Commissioners.

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary; performance pay or bonuses; overtime; and any other allowance subject to UK taxation.

This presentation is based on accrued payments made by the Commission and thus recorded in these accounts.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by the Inland Revenue as a taxable emolument (salary). Mileage Allowance Payment for Commissioners are classed as a benefit in kind and relate to the use of their own vehicles for travel to the Commission's office for meetings.

Benefits in Kind paid during the 2011/12 financial year were £1,600 (2010/11: £1,700).

Pension benefits (audited information)

Commissioners

The Commission is liable for pension contributions of:

£4,587 to the University of Ulster for the year ended 31 March 2012 for Professor Monica McWilliams (2010–11: £11,005) and

£5,386 to the University of Nottingham for the year ended 31 March 2012 for Professor Michael O'Flaherty (2010-11: £nil).

No further pension contributions were made for Commissioners in the year ended 31 March 2012 (2010–11: £nil).

Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Management Committee

Pension contributions of £365 were made for the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Management Committee (2010-11: £1,930).

Management Team

	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/3/12 and related lump sum £000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £000	CETV at 31/3/12 £000	CETV at 31/3/11* £000	Real increase in CETV £000	Employer contribution to partnership pension account Nearest £100
Virginia McVea Director	0-5 plus lump sum of 0-5	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 0-2.5	32	30	0	0
David Russell Deputy Director	5-10 plus lump sum of 0-5	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 0-2.5	48	39	4	0
Don Leeson Head of Corporate Services	5-10 plus lump sum of 15-20	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 0-2.5	89	85	2	0
Ciaran Ó Maoláin Head of Legal Services, Policy and research	0-5 plus lump sum of 10-15	0-2.5 plus lump sum of 0-2.5	89	85	3	0

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 30 July 2007, Commission staff may be in one of four defined benefit schemes; either a final salary scheme (classic, premium or classic plus); or a whole career scheme (nuvos). These statutory arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under classic, premium, classic plus and nuvos are increased annually in line with Pensions Increase legislation. Members joining from October 2002 may opt for either the appropriate defined benefit arrangement or a 'money purchase' stakeholder pension with an employer contribution (partnership pension account).

Employee contributions are set at the rate of 1.5 per cent of pensionable earnings for classic and 3.5 per cent for premium,

classic plus and nuvos. Benefits in classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years initial pension is payable on retirement. For premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum. Classic plus is essentially a hybrid with benefits for service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per classic and benefits for service from October 2002 worked out as in premium.

In nuvos a member builds up a pension based on his pensionable earnings during their period of scheme membership. At the end of the scheme year (31 March) the member's earned pension account is credited with 2.3 per cent of their pensionable earnings in that scheme year

and the accrued pension is uprated in line with Pensions Increase legislation. In all cases members may opt to give up (commute) pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004.

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

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over pension age. Pension age is 60 for members of classic, premium and classic plus and 65 for members of nuvos.

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website: www.civilservice.gov.uk/my-civil-service/pensions.

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost. CETVs are worked out within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

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



Virginia McVea
Accounting Officer

Date: 14 June 2013

Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities

Under Section 7(2)(a) of Schedule 7 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (with the consent of HM Treasury) has directed the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's state of affairs at the year end and of its income and expenditure, changes in Taxpayers' Equity, and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual and, in particular, to:

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the HM Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis.

The Accounting Officer of the Northern Ireland Office has designated the Director as Accounting Officer of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's assets, are set out in Managing Public Money, published by HM Treasury.

Governance Statement

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

The Commission complies materially with the guidance provided in the corporate governance code for central government departments.

As a non-departmental public body (NDPB), sponsored by the Northern Ireland Office, responsible to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland the governance framework of the organisation includes a financial Statement and Management Agreement. The Commissioners also operate in accordance with Standing Orders and guidance on corporate governance as well as agreed principles of public service in the Nolan Principles. The Chief Commissioner and Commissioners have corporate responsibility for promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources by the Commission, demonstrating high standards of corporate governance at all times. This role includes ensuring that they receive and review regular financial information concerning the management of the Commission, are informed in a timely manner about any concerns about the activities of the Commission, and provide assurance to the sponsoring Department that appropriate action has been taken on such concerns.

Discussions on financial matters and risk are normally held with officials at the NIO, rather than directly with Ministers. However, the Chief Commissioner and Commissioners have access to the Secretary of State on request.

The outgoing Commissioners reviewed their effectiveness before leaving office and the incoming Commissioners intend to review their performance annually.

Commissioners’ Meetings

The Commission met 10 times during the reporting period.

The following served as Commissioners from April 2011 – August 2011

	Meetings attended
Professor Monica McWilliams	4
Mr Tom Duncan	4
Mr Alan Henry, OBE	4
Ms Ann Hope	3
Professor Colin Harvey	3
Ms Geraldine Rice, MBE	2

The following served as Commissioners from September 2011 – March 2012

	Meetings attended
Professor Michael O’Flaherty	6
Ms Christine Collins	6
Mr John Corey	6
Mr Milton Kerr, QPM	6
Ms Grainia Long	6
Mr Alan McBride	6
Ms Marion Reynolds	6
Mr Paul Yam, MBE	5

Audit and Risk Management Committee Meetings

The Audit and Risk Management Committee met 4 times during the reporting period.

	Meetings attended
Dr Bill Smith (Independent Chairperson)	4
Mr Alan Henry, OBE	3
Ms Ann Hope	3
Ms Geraldine Rice, MBE	1
Mr John Corey	1
Ms Marion Reynolds	1
Ms Christine Collins	0

The Audit and Risk Management Committee report as required and at least annually to the full Commission board through the Independent Chair of the Committee. Audit and Risk Management Committee papers are available to all Commissioners. The new Commission works through one Commission meeting only and has no separate standing Committees other than the Audit and Risk. The Commission is also represented by Commissioners and staff on the joint Independent Monitoring Committee with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

During this year the Commission has met 10 times. Commission minutes have been made available and the report of the Audit and Risk Committee is tabled for April 2012 for consideration.

There were no lapses of data security to report.

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

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Commission's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in the Commission for the year ended 31 March 2012 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts, and accords with Treasury guidance.

The Commission's risk management framework, involves all Commissioners and staff in reviewing and assessing risk on a regular basis, so that risk is an integral part of the ongoing planning and monitoring processes of the Commission.

Commissioners and staff have received training on risk management. During 2011-12, all staff underwent awareness training in respect of managing information risks (see below).

The Chairperson of the Commission's Audit and Risk Management Committee, who is independent of the Commission, also provides an additional source of expertise for management and Commissioners to consult on specific issues as they arise.

The Commission has a continuous, proactive and systematic approach to understand, manage and communicate risk across the organisation. The risk management framework is comprehensive and involves Commissioners, managers and staff as follows:

- overall responsibility for ensuring that risks are identified and an appropriate framework is in place to manage those

risks down to an acceptable level rests with the Commission's Accounting Officer;

- individual members of the Management Team are nominated as 'risk owners', delegated with responsibility from the Director for monitoring and reporting on specific risks within their area of work (during 2011/12, following the restructure of the Management Team all risks are owned either by the Director or Deputy Director);
 - the risk register, and the effectiveness of activities to manage identified risks, is reviewed monthly by the Management Team;
 - the Audit and Risk Management Committee, which normally meets every other month, reviews the entire risk register and reports to the Commission, through the Director, on the effectiveness of activities to manage identified risks following each meeting;
 - the Commission formally reviews the risk register and the effectiveness of the risk management framework annually; and
 - the external environment is assessed for any new risks as part of the annual business planning process.
- reputation – the Commission, as part of the induction process for new Commissioners, provided media training as appropriate as well as training on the work of NHRIs and their roles and responsibilities within the international system. Commissioners and staff also abide by and act in accordance with the Code of Governance and Staff Code of Conduct respectively;
 - effectiveness and efficiency – financial reports are presented to each Management Meeting, Audit and Risk Management Committee meeting and Commission meeting, setting out expenditure and commitments, performance against profile and forecast outturn. There is also regular liaison with the NIO over financial performance. An effectiveness and efficiency plan for managing the Commission's reduced budget allocation for 2012-13 and beyond was presented to the NIO in December 2011;
 - legal costs – the Commission continued to with processes to estimate and monitor legal costs in the progress of supported cases to ensure proper management of public monies and ultimately that costs came in within budget;
 - information security – staff completed the National School of Government's online training package on protecting information and the Commission's Information Assurance Policy and audit compliance was implemented;
 - industrial relations – the Commission has liaised with the Labour Relations Agency to optimise any potential for improving industrial relations and has committed to ongoing team development for 2012-13.

Information risk is managed by the Commission within the context of the risk management framework. The Commission seeks to manage down the likelihood of the risk materialising through an Information Assurance Policy and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) policies and procedures, supported by training for staff on these.

During 2011-12 the Commission managed and significantly mitigated the following principle key risks:

In addition to the mechanisms outlined above, as Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the Deputy Director within the Commission who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Commission (the Board), the Audit and Risk Management Committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

The Audit and Risk Management Committee comprises an independent Chairperson, who has extensive financial management experience at a senior level in the public sector, who was appointed following an open recruitment competition, and up to four Commissioners with a range of experience in corporate governance. Both the Commission's internal and external auditors also attend Audit and Risk Management Committee meetings, as will a representative of the Northern Ireland Office.

As outlined, Audit and Risk Management Committee minutes are tabled at Commission meetings and the Committee reports annually to the Commission. Furthermore, the Chairperson has direct access to the Director and Chief Commissioner as appropriate.

The Audit and Risk Management Committee reviews its effectiveness by assessing its operation and constitution

against good practice guidelines issued by the National Audit Office. It also benchmarks itself against practice in sister organisations, through discussions between the Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee and his counterparts.

An annual Learning and Development Plan is agreed for the Audit and Risk Management Committee each year to help ensure that Committee members have the knowledge and skills to perform their role effectively and maintain a focus on continuous improvement.

The Audit and Risk Management Committee reviews the effectiveness of the Commission's internal control mechanisms, including receiving and approving internal audit plans and reports, approving the Commission's Financial Procedures Manual and significant changes to it, overseeing the risk management framework and reporting to the Commission on the effectiveness of activities to manage the occurrence or impact of identified risks. The Committee also reviews all international travel undertaken by Commissioners and staff, expenses claims submitted by the Chief Commissioner and the Director, and purchases over £1,000, with a particular focus on any contracts let by single tender action. As an additional reputational safeguard, the Chair of the Committee discharges the role of Authorising Officer for the Chief Commissioner's travel and expenses claims.

The Committee contributed an audit, risk management and value perspective to the development of the Commission's strategic and business plans, and of its policies across a range of issues including sickness, complaints and performance appraisal.

The Commission's Strategic Internal Audit Plan covers the period 2011-12. This focused audit activity on areas of greatest risk, and provided comprehensive assurance of the effectiveness of our system of internal control. The most recent audit took place in December 2011 and covered:

- corporate governance arrangements
- financial systems
- payroll

It also followed up on recommendations arising from the previous internal audit that took place in 2010.

The internal audit concluded that the overall level of control within the Commission is satisfactory, and identified areas for further improvement, for which an action plan was agreed by the Commission's Audit and Risk Management Committee – progress in implementing the action plan is reported to each Committee meeting.

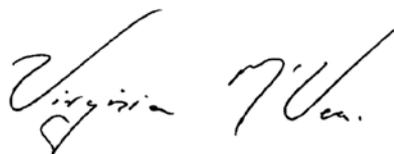
In respect of corporate governance, the Committee noted that the current structures were consistent with the requirements of the Commission's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum; and that the information provided to the Board enables it to review progress towards its strategic and business planning targets in a timely and effective manner.

Commissioners receive bi-monthly reports on financial performance and audit activity, and regular updates on the risk register. The recent internal audit awarded a substantial assurance rating to the financial and management information provided.

Internal audit for the period gave an assurance rating of satisfactory across the systems examined, being:

- Corporate governance and risk management
- Other financial systems
- Payroll and pension

There are no significant internal control issues within the Commission at present.



Virginia McVea
Accounting Officer

Date: 14 June 2013

The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission for the year ended 31 March 2012 under the Northern Ireland Act 1998. These comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

Respective responsibilities of Accounting Officer and auditor

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

Scope of the Audit of the Financial Statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Northern Ireland Human

Rights Commission's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission; and the overall presentation of the financial statements.

In addition I read all the financial and non-financial information in the annual report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies I consider the implications for my certificate.

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

Opinion on Regularity

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

Opinion on financial statements

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission's affairs as at 31 March 2012 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Secretary of State directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion:

- the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions issued under the Northern Ireland Act 1998; and
- the information given in the Chief Commissioner's Foreword and Management Commentary for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which I report by exception

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

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

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Amyas C E Morse

Comptroller and Auditor General

National Audit Office

157–197 Buckingham Palace Road

Victoria

London

SW1W 9SP

Date: 19 June 2013

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2012

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2012

	Notes	2012 £	2011 (restated) £
Expenditure			
Staff costs	4	1,059,903	1,144,694
Other Operating costs	5	539,637	522,552
Depreciation	5	65,829	63,224
Net (upward)/downward revaluation (credited)/charged to General Reserve	5	(2,110)	(5,025)
Total expenditure		1,663,259	1,725,445
Income			
Other income	6	-	(33,649)
Total income		-	(33,649)
Net expenditure		1,663,259	1,691,796
Interest payable		43	74
Net expenditure after interest		1,663,302	1,691,870
Total Comprehensive Expenditure for the year ended 31 March		1,663,302	1,691,870

All amounts above relate to continuing activities.

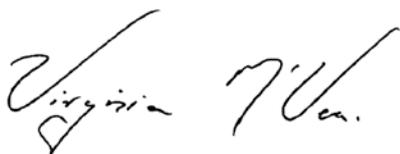
The notes on pages 39 to 52 form part of the financial statements.

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2012

	Notes	31 March 2012		31 March 2011 (restated)		1 April 2010 (restated)	
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Non-current assets:							
Property, plant and equipment	7	122,719		182,537		237,928	
Total non-current assets		122,719		182,537		237,928	
Current assets:							
Trade and other receivables	9	18,823		38,698		42,841	
Cash and cash equivalents	10	492,921		282,572		355,709	
Total current assets		511,744		321,270		398,550	
Total assets		634,463		503,807		636,478	
Current liabilities:							
Trade and other payables	11	(313,287)		(177,627)		(259,704)	
Provisions – other	12	(126,668)		–		–	
Provisions - legal	12	(90,991)		–		–	
Total current liabilities		(530,946)		(177,627)		(259,704)	
Total assets less current liabilities		103,517		326,180		376,774	
Non-current liabilities:							
Other payables	11	–		(531)		(1,227)	
Provisions - legal	12	(146,840)		(266,670)		(262,698)	
Assets less liabilities		(43,323)		58,979		112,849	
Taxpayers Equity							
General reserve		(43,323)		58,979		112,849	
		(43,323)		58,979		112,849	

The notes on pages 39 to 52 form part of the financial statements.

The financial statements on pages 35 to 52 were approved by the Commission on 18 February 2013 and were signed on its behalf by:



Virginia McVea
Accounting Officer

Date: 14 June 2013

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 March 2012

	Notes	2012 £	2011 (restated) £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net Expenditure after interest		(1,663,302)	(1,691,870)
Decrease/(increase) in trade and other receivables	9	19,875	4,143
Increase/(decrease) in trade payables	11	135,129	(78,801)
Depreciation	5	65,829	63,224
Net (upward)/downward property revaluation	5	(2,110)	(5,025)
Use of provisions	12	97,829	–
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(1,346,750)	(1,708,329)
Cash flows from investment activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	7	(3,901)	(2,808)
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(3,901)	(2,808)
Cash inflow from financing activities		1,561,000	1,638,000
Net cash outflow from financing activities		1,561,000	1,638,000
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period	10	210,349	(73,137)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	10	282,572	355,709
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	10	492,921	282,572

The notes on pages 39 to 52 form part of the financial statements.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the Year Ended 31 March 2012

	General Reserve £	Total Reserves £
Changes in taxpayers' equity for 2010-11		
Balance at 31 March 2010	375,547	375,547
Decrease/(Increase) in provision	(262,698)	(262,698)
Balance at 1 April 2010	112,849	112,849
	112,849	112,849
Comprehensive Expenditure for the year	(1,691,870)	(1,691,870)
Revaluation of Leasehold improvements	–	–
Grants from NIO	1,638,000	1,638,000
Balance at 31 March 2011	58,979	58,979
Changes in taxpayers' equity for 2011-12		
Comprehensive Expenditure for the year	(1,663,302)	(1,663,302)
Revaluation of Leasehold improvements	–	–
Grants from NIO	1,561,000	1,561,000
Balance at 31 March 2012	(43,323)	(43,323)

The notes on pages 39 to 52 form part of the financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2012

1. Statement of accounting policies 1.2 Critical accounting estimates and key judgements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) for 2011-12, issued by HM Treasury. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission for the year ending 31 March 2012 are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention, modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment.

The accounts comply with the accounting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board, FReM and accounting and disclosure requirements issued by HM Treasury, insofar as those requirements are appropriate.

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with IFRS requires the use of accounting estimates and assumptions. It also requires the Commission to exercise judgement in the process of applying the accounting policies. We continually evaluate our estimates, assumptions and judgements based on available information and experience. As the use of estimates is inherent in financial reporting, actual results could differ from these estimates. The estimates and assumptions which have the most significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities are discussed below.

(i) Depreciation of property, plant and equipment

Depreciation is provided in the accounts so as to write-down the respective assets to their residual values over their expected useful lives and as such the selection of the estimated useful lives and the expected residual values of the assets requires the use of estimates and judgements. Details of the estimated useful lives are as shown in Note 1.7.

(ii) Impairment of property, plant and equipment

Where there is an indication that the carrying value of items of property, plant and equipment may have been impaired through events or changes in circumstances, a review will be undertaken of the recoverable amount of that asset.

1.3 Accounting standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards adopted in the year ended 31 March 2012

The Commission has reviewed the standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards that became effective during 2011-12 and which are relevant to its operations. The Commission considers that the adoption of these standards has not had a significant impact on its results or financial position.

1.4 Accounting standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards not yet effective

Certain new standards, interpretations and amendments to existing standards have been published that are mandatory for the Commission's accounting periods beginning on or after 1 April 2012, or later periods, but which the Commission has not adopted early. The Commission does not anticipate that the adoption of these standards will have a material impact on the Commission's accounts in the period of initial application.

1.5 Income

Other income is received from contributions to joint research and other projects, including grant income from other sources and is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as Operating Income.

1.6 Grant-in-aid

Grant-in-aid is credited directly to the General Reserve as it is regarded as

contributions from a controlling party which gives rise to a financial interest in the residual interest in the Commission.

1.7 Property, plant and equipment and depreciation

Property plant and equipment comprises leasehold improvements to Temple Court, fixtures and fittings and information technology at fair value.

Items of property, plant and equipment are capitalised if they are intended for use on a continuous basis and their individual original purchase cost is £1,000 or more. Items with an individual cost of less than £1,000 but, when taken together, represent a significant investment will be grouped.

Leasehold improvement expenditure has been capitalised and is restated at current cost using professional valuations. Valuations are carried out annually using indices compiled by the Office for National Statistics, and every third year by professional external valuers employed by the Land and Property Services (Valuations) in accordance with the Appraisal and Valuation Manual prepared and published by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, as at 31 March. The last valuation was carried out in October 2010.

Any surplus/loss on revaluation is treated as follows:

- Unrealised surplus arising from revaluation of property, plant and equipment is credited to the Revaluation Reserve unless it reverses a revaluation

decrease of the same asset previously charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure;

- Losses arising from the revaluation of property, plant and equipment are debited to the Revaluation Reserve to the extent that gains were recorded previously, and otherwise to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

All property, plant and equipment is reviewed annually as part of an inventory check against the Commission's asset register.

All other property, plant and equipment is valued on the basis of historical cost less depreciation as an approximation of fair value due to short life or low value of the individual assets.

Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis at rates calculated to write-off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life. The estimated useful lives for depreciation purposes are:

Leasehold improvements:

10 years (or the life of the lease, whichever is least)

Computer equipment:

3 years

Fixtures, fittings and equipment:

5 years

1.8 Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged against the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1.9 Finance leases

Finance leases are valued using the net present value of future lease payments using real rate of interest set by HM Treasury (currently 3.5 per cent).

1.10 Pensions

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Schemes (PCSPS) which are described in Note 3. The defined benefit schemes are unfunded and are non-contributory except in respect of dependants' benefits. The Commission recognises the expected cost of these elements on a systematic and rational basis over the period during which it benefits from employees' services by payment to the PCSPS of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payment of future benefits is a charge on the PCSPS. In respect of the defined contribution schemes, the Commission recognises the contributions payable for the year.

Separate arrangements are in place for the Chief Commissioner's pension scheme, which is not part of the PCSPS.

1.11 Value Added Tax

The Commission is ineligible to reclaim input VAT on expenditure. Therefore, all expenditure is inclusive of VAT.

1.12 Legal casework expenditure

Section 70 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 enables the Commission to support legal cases in relation to the protection of human rights. Some of these cases can span several years.

In some cases, costs are recoverable from the respondent if the applicant is successful. Given this, while the Commission decides to support cases, contingent on the outcome, payments are not normally made until judgment is passed, and the judge decides on a cost order (ie whether the 'losing' side should pay all costs or each side should bear their own costs). Given that a criterion for Commission support is whether a case has a 'reasonable chance of success', it does not expect to incur costs in many cases. However, cases can be lost. In these cases, it is possible that the applicant could be asked to pay the respondent's costs. Where this happens, the Commission may pay these costs on behalf of the applicant. Any such potential liabilities are noted in the financial statements as contingent liabilities.

There are currently no such liabilities.

1.13 Staff costs

Under IAS19 Employee Benefits legislation, all staff costs must be recorded as an expense as soon as the Commission is obligated to pay

them. This includes the cost of any untaken leave as at the year-end.

2. Prior period adjustment

Casework costs for long standing legal cases have previously been recognised as an accrual when the Commission commits to take on the cases and provides a guarantee to the Courts and members of the public that they will undertake the cases on their behalf. However, given the continuing uncertainty regarding the completion of the cases, we believe that recognition of the amounts involved as a provision would better reflect the uncertainty of the timing of the settlement of the liability. As a result, a prior period adjustment has been made in the accounts reclassifying £267k (2009-10 £263k) of case work accruals in 2010-11 as provisions. The closing balances for 2009-10 and 2010-11 have been restated as a result of this reclassification.

3. Analysis of net expenditure by segment

In line with the provisions of IFRS 8, Operating Segments, the Commission does not analyse its net expenditure by operating segment as it has concluded that it has no separately identifiable operating segments. This conclusion is based on the Commission's current system / format of internal management reporting to the Board, who consider financial performance at whole organisation level.

4. Staff numbers and related costs

	2011-12 total £	Commissioners £	Permanently employed staff £	Others £	2010 - 11 total £
Wages and salaries	900,146	134,670	700,705	64,771	937,693
Social security costs	57,337	11,579	43,399	2,359	73,293
Other pension costs	102,420	9,973	90,243	2,204	133,708
Total staff costs	1,059,903	156,222	834,347	69,334	1,144,694

Details of the pension contributions of £9,973 payable in respect of Commissioners (2010-11: £11,005) are described in the Remuneration Report.

The Commission's staff are covered by the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme. The PCSPS is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but the Commission is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The scheme actuary valued the scheme as at 31 March 2007. Details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation (www.civilservice.gov.uk/my-civil-service/pensions).

For 2011-12, employers' contributions of £92,010 were payable to the PCSPS (2010-11: £121,790) at one of four rates in the range 16.7 per cent to 21.8 per cent of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions usually every four years following a full scheme valuation. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2011-12 to be paid

when the member retires and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions of £347 were paid to one or more of the panel of three appointed stakeholder pension providers (2010-11: £1,835). Employer contributions are age-related and range from 3 per cent to 12.5 per cent of pensionable pay. Employers also match employee contributions up to 3 per cent of pensionable pay. In addition, employer contributions of £18, 0.8 per cent of pensionable pay, were payable to the PCSPS to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill-health retirement of these employees (2010-11: £95).

Contributions due to the partnership pension providers at the reporting date were £72 (2010-11: £nil). Contributions prepaid at that date were £nil (2010-11: £nil).

No person retired early on ill-health grounds during 2011-12.

Average number of persons employed

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

	2011-12	Commissioners	Permanently employed staff	Others	2010 - 11 total
Directly employed	20.0	2.0	17.0	1.0	23.5
Other	2.0	-	-	2.0	1.5
Total	22.0	2.0	17.0	3.0	25.0

Reporting of Civil Service and other compensation schemes – exit packages

The total number of exit packages in 2011-12 were as follows:

- One compulsory redundancy payment of £35-£40k
- One compulsory redundancy payment of £30-£35k
- Two compensation in lieu of notice payments of £5-10k each

There was one severance payment of £25-£30K and one statutory redundancy payment of <£10K made in 2010-11.

Redundancy and compensation in lieu of notice payments of £80k payable in April 2012 have been accrued and provided for in 2011-12.

5. Other expenditure

	2012	2011
	£	£
Accountancy fees	1,000	1,200
Advertising, publicity and publications	28,450	25,992
Auditor's (NAO) remuneration	10,000	8000
Bill of Rights	(142) ⁸	33,698
Building maintenance and expenses	20,688	17,189
Conferences and seminars	1,157	598
Consultancy	3,194	17,679
Education	376	321
Insurance	8,578	9,039
Internal audit	8,659	6,974
Investigations	20,844 ⁹	12,482
IT	27,161	32,225
Legal casework (non-recoverable)	18,076	75,864
Light and heat	23,193	23,679
Other expenses	892	1,114
Printing, postage and stationery	15,453	15,796
Professional fees	150,793	17,486
Rates	49,459	47,775
Rentals under operating leases	103,941	112,288
Rental for car park	2,676	1,350
Staff training and recruitment	13,829	27,900
Telephone	10,476	9,750
Travel, subsistence and hospitality	20,884	24,153
	539,637	522,552
Non-Cash Items:		
Depreciation	65,829	63,224
Net (upward) revaluation on property	(2,110)	(5,025)
	603,356	580,751

⁸ The negative expenditure for the Bill of Rights is a result of an invoice being received in-year which was less than the amount accrued for in 2010-11.

⁹ Research and Development costs are included in Investigation Costs.

6. Income

The commission received Operating Income of £110,000 from The Atlantic Philanthropies for a programme of work on Education (2010-11: £33,649 received from The Atlantic Philanthropies for a programme of work on the Bill of Rights). The amount of £110,000 has been deferred as the programme of work is due to commence in 2012-13.

7. Property, plant and equipment

2011-12	Buildings	Information technology	Furniture & fittings	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost or valuation				
At 1 April 2011	176,280	145,570	200,238	522,088
Additions	–	3,901	–	3,901
Disposals	–	(2,932)	(3,145)	(6,077)
Revaluation	2,815	–	–	2,815
At 31 March 2012	179,095	146,539	197,093	522,727
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2011	35,255	127,863	176,433	339,551
Charged in year	41,953	10,671	13,205	65,829
Disposals	–	(2,932)	(3,145)	(6,077)
Revaluation	705	–	–	705
At 31 March 2012	77,913	135,602	186,493	400,008
Net book value at 31 March 2012	101,182	10,937	10,600	122,719
Net book value at 31 March 2011	141,025	17,707	23,805	182,537
Asset financing:				
Owned	101,182	10,937	10,019	122,138
Finance leased	–	–	581	581
Net book value at 31 March 2012	101,182	10,937	10,600	122,719

2010-11	Buildings	Information technology	Furniture & fittings	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost or valuation				
At 1 April 2010	170,000	142,762	200,238	513,000
Additions	–	2,808	–	2,808
Revaluation	6,280	–	–	6,280
At 31 March 2011	176,280	145,570	200,238	522,088
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2010	–	116,030	159,042	275,072
Charged in year	34,000	11,833	17,391	63,224
Revaluation	1,255	–	–	1,255
At 31 March 2011	35,255	127,863	176,433	339,551
Net book value at 31 March 2011	141,025	17,707	23,805	182,537
Net book value at 31 March 2010	170,000	26,732	41,196	237,928
Asset financing:				
Owned	141,025	17,707	22,554	181,286
Finance leased	–	–	1,251	1,251
Net book value at 31 March 2011	141,025	17,707	23,805	182,537

8. Financial instruments

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

The Commission has no powers to borrow or invest surplus funds and has limited year end flexibility. Financial assets and liabilities are generated by day-to-day operational activities and are not held to change the risks facing the Commission in undertaking activities.

Liquidity risk

The Commission is financed by grant-in-aid from the Northern Ireland Office and is accountable to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and is not therefore exposed to significant liquidity risk.

Interest rate risk

All financial assets and financial liabilities of the Commission carry nil rates of interest and therefore are not exposed to interest rate risk.

Currency risk

The Commission does not trade in foreign currency and therefore has no exposure to foreign currency risk.

Fair values

The book value and fair value of the Commission's financial assets and financial liabilities as at 31 March 2012 are set out below:

Primary financial instruments:

Financial assets	2011/12	2010/11
	Book value/ Fair value	Book value/ Fair value
	£	£
Cash and cash equivalents	492,921	282,572

9. Trade receivables and other current assets

	2011-12	2010-11
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Prepayments and accrued income	18,823	38,698
	18,823	38,698

10. Cash and cash equivalents

	2011-12	2010-11
	£	£
Balance at 1 April	282,572	355,709
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	210,349	(73,137)
Balance at 31 March	492,921	282,572
The following balances at 31 March were held at:		
Commercial banks and cash in hand	492,921	282,572
Balance at 31 March	492,921	282,572

11 . Trade payables and other current liabilities

	2011-12	2010-11
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Taxation and social security	15,110	28,581
Trade payables	35,750	20,471
Other payables	5,789	2,753
Accruals	146,062	125,056
Deferred income	110,000	–
Current part of finance leases	576	766
	313,287	177,627
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Finance leases	–	531
	–	531

12. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2011-12	2011-12	2010-11	2010-11
	£	£	£	£
	Legal	Other	Legal	Other
Balance at 1 April	266,670	0	262,698	0
Provided in the year	0	126,668	3,972	0
Provisions utilised in the year	(28,839)	0	0	0
Balance at 31 March	237,831	126,668	266,670	0

The provision for legal casework costs is estimated and is based on the maximum anticipated costs, however it is possible these costs could be less.

The provision for other costs is for redundancy costs payable in April and July 2012 and tribunal settlement costs paid since the year end.

13. Commitments under leases

13.1 Operating leases

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

	2011-12	2010-11
	£	£
Buildings		
Not later than one year	103,800	103,800
Later than one year and not later than five years	207,600	311,400
Later than five years	–	–
	311,400	415,200
Other		
Not later than one year	–	1,184
Later than one year and not later than five years	–	–
	–	1,184

13.2 Finance leases

Total future minimum lease payments under finance leases, which all relate to photocopiers, are given in the table below for each of the following periods.

	2011-12	2010-11
	£	£
Other		
Not later than one year	577	766
Later than one year and not later than five years	–	575
Later than five years	–	–
	577	1,341
Less interest element	(1)	(43)
	576	1,298

14. Capital Commitments

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission does not have any capital commitments.

15. Related-party transactions

The Commission is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Northern Ireland Office (NIO).

The NIO is regarded as a related party. During the year the Commission had various transactions with NIO, associated with the receipt of grant-in-aid.

In addition the Commission has had various transactions with other Government departments.

None of the Commissioners, Management Team or other related parties has undertaken any material transactions with the Commission during the year.

16. Intra-government balances

	2011-12	2010-11
	£	£
Receivables		
Balances with central government bodies	1,058	–
Balances with local authorities	–	1,014
Total intra-government balances	1,058	1,014
Balances with bodies external to government	17,765	37,684
Total	18,823	38,698
Payables		
Balances with central government bodies	79,960	42,932
Balances with local authorities	9,256	–
Total intra-government balances	89,216	42,932
Balances with bodies external to government	224,071	134,695
Total	312,287	177,627

All of the above intra-government balances are due within one year.

All balances falling due after more than one year are with bodies external to government.

17. Events after the reporting period

On 4 September 2012 the Secretary of State the Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP was replaced by Theresa Villiers MP following a Cabinet reshuffle.

There have been no significant events since the end of the financial year which would affect the results for the year or assets and liabilities at the year-end.

The Annual Report and Accounts are authorised for issue on the same date as the Comptroller and Auditor General signed the audit certificate.



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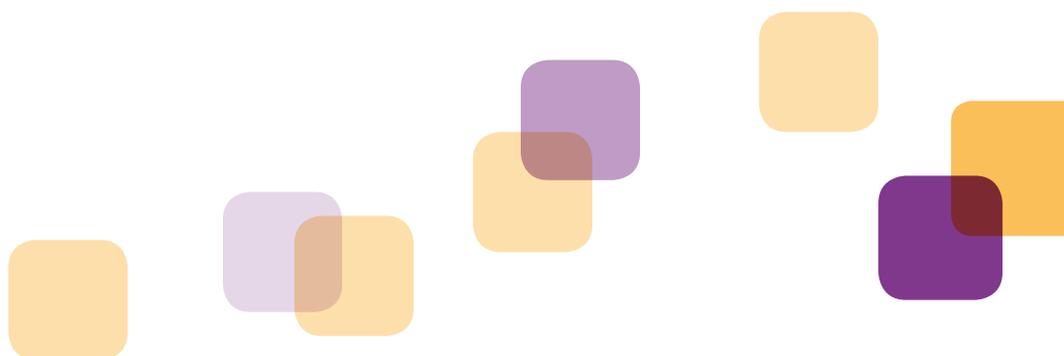
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