



**The Commissioner for Children and Young People for
Northern Ireland**

Annual Report and Accounts

**For the year ended
31st March 2007**



**Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly under
Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern
Ireland) Order 2003 by the OFMDFM**

NIA 55/07-08

Belfast: The Stationery Office



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ANNUAL REPORT

DIRECTORS REPORT

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland (NICCY) is an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. NICCY was established on 3rd October 2003 under the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003.

These accounts are prepared in accordance with Schedule 2 11 (1) of the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and in accordance with the 2006-07 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland.

Principal Activities

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland's principal aim is to 'safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young people'. While the detailed powers are set out in the legislation, they may be grouped under three main areas as follows:

- Promoting children's rights- the Commissioner will be guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, an international agreement setting out how children should be treated and the rights that they have.
- Complaints and legal action- the Commissioner can deal with individual complaints from children and young persons, or their parents/ guardians about any services that impact on those under 18 years old (or under the age of 21 for those with a disability or leaving care).
- Research and enquiries- the Commissioner wants the Office to base all its work on helping children and young people on thorough research. The Commissioner has the power to undertake general enquiries into issues where he believes children and young people are being adversely affected. The Commissioner is also required to review the ways that those providing services for children and young people listen to complaints and take account of their views.

Important Events Occurring After the Year End

There have been no significant events since the year-end, which would affect these accounts.



Results for the Year

The results for the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland for the period are set out in detail on page 66. The net expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2007 was £1,909,685, following a credit of £26,107 in notional costs. This net expenditure resulted in a balance in reserves of £714,565 at 31st March 2007. With effect from 2006/07 accounting period, NICCY was required to account for grants-in-aid as financing and not income. Note 1.2 on page 69 shows the change and impact of this accounting policy on the current year and on the certified 2005-06 accounts.

Fixed Assets

Details of the movements of fixed assets are set out in Note 5 to the Accounts.

Research & Development

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland does not engage in any research and development activities as defined by UK GAAP.

Charitable Donations

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland made no charitable donations during the period.

Pensions Liabilities

Staff Pension Liabilities are borne by the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) – see Remuneration Report and notes 1.6 and 2(b) to the Accounts.

Payments to Suppliers

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with the Government's Better Payment Practice Code.

Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later.

During the period 96.98% of bills were paid within this standard.

Disabled Persons

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland seeks to follow best practice guidance as set out in Disability Codes of Practice, on employment and the provision of services to disabled persons.

Equality of Opportunity

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

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland will, in all its actions, conform to both the letter and the spirit of the relevant equality legislation. The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland will provide equality of opportunity to all persons irrespective of whether or not there are legislative provisions in place.

Employee Involvement

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland encourages widespread consultation and exchange of information at all levels within the Office through staff and team briefings.

Commissioner's Interests

An up to date register of Commissioner's interests is maintained by the Accounting Officer and is available for inspection at the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland offices in Millennium House, 17-25 Great Victoria Street, Belfast BT2 7BA.

Auditors

The financial statements are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland (C&AG) in accordance with the Government Resources and Accounts Act (Northern Ireland) 2001. He is head of the Northern Ireland Audit Office and he and his staff are wholly independent of the Commissioner for Children and Young People, and reports his findings to Parliament.

The audit of the financial statements for 2006/07 resulted in an audit fee of £13,000 which is included in the Operating Costs within the Operating Cost Statement.

Disclosure of Audit Information

So far as the Accounting Officer is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the entity's auditors are unaware. The Accounting Officer has taken all steps that she ought to have taken to make herself aware of any audit information and to establish that the entity's auditors are aware of that information.

**Offices of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for
Northern Ireland:**

Millennium House
17-25 Great Victoria Street
Belfast
BT2 7BA

Auditor:

Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
Belfast
7 1EU

Signed by:



Patricia Lewsley
Commissioner and Accounting Officer

MANAGEMENT COMMENTARY

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland has prepared this review in accordance with the Accounting Standards Board Reporting Statement: Operating and Financial Review. Following the spirit of the Reporting Standard, this Management Commentary shall focus on matters that are relevant to the interests of members. In the context of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland, 'members' shall be all users of the accounts.

The Commissioner

On 19th December 2006 Patricia Lewsley was announced as the second Commissioner for Children and Young People and took up appointment on 8th January 2007.

Mr Barney McNeany, Chief Executive of NICCY, was appointed as Interim Commissioner on 2nd May 2006, following the death of the first Commissioner, Nigel William on 28th March 2006.

Description of the Business

The mission of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland (NICCY) is to:

Safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young people by listening to them and working with them to challenge and change the world in which they live.

While the detailed powers are set out in the legislation, they may be grouped under the three main areas identified under 'Principal Activities' within the Director's Report. To ensure that NICCY meets the aspirations set out in our mission statement and succeeds in carrying out its functions and duties under the legislation, NICCY carried out a large scale research project in its first year, comparing Northern Ireland against the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This research helped us to develop our draft priorities for action for our Corporate Plan for 2005 to 2008. We then carried out a Northern Ireland wide consultation exercise between October 2004 and February 2005 to help us rank these priorities and identify areas that we had missed. As a result of this exercise, we identified 15 priority areas for action as follows:

- Having your say;
- Knowing your rights;
- Implementation of the UNCRC;
- Special educational needs;
- Bullying;
- Road safety and school transport;

- Facilities for leisure for all children and young people and the development of a play strategy;
- Children and young people with mental health issues and suicidal tendencies;
- Poverty;
- Children and young people with disabilities;
- Children and young people and risk-taking behaviour;
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Physical punishment;
- Children and young people and crime;
- Children and young people and the Troubles.

Following the identification of our priority areas, we set out 23 corporate objectives for NICCY from 2005 to 2008. These were developed using the Balanced Scorecard tool, with NICCY arranging them into the following quadrants:

- Our stakeholders (children, young people, parents and others)
- How we do things;
- NICCY staff; and
- Money.

This Balanced Scorecard forms the basis against which NICCY measures its performance and reports to Government.

Full details of the our priorities and objectives are set out in NICCY's Corporate Plan 2005 to 2008, and the annual Business Plans, all of which are available on the NICCY website (www.niccy.org).

NICCY's Environment

You can read more about the way NICCY works in our Corporate Plan 2005 to 2008, which is available to download at www.niccy.org. It explains in more detail the context within which NICCY operates. However, the key aspects are as follows:

Legislative and Policy

NICCY was established by the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. The Order outlines NICCY's functions, duties and powers. A copy of the Order is available from our website (www.niccy.org).

Three other key areas of legislation/ policy will have a major influence on the lives of children and young people within Northern Ireland.

- The 10 year strategy for children and young people in Northern Ireland 'Our Children and Young People - Our Pledge' and associated Action Plan has been published by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. While NICCY has welcomed the strategy, the action plan must be

much more robust. We will work closely with Government to review how well this works.

- NICCY is monitoring the equality legislation being brought forward under a single Equality Bill. We will work closely with the Equality Commission and other statutory and voluntary organisations to ensure that children and young people's rights are fully protected within the legislation.
- Government has also indicated its commitment to a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. NICCY will work with colleagues in the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the NGO sector to promote the full incorporation of the UNCRC in Northern Ireland legislation through the Bill of Rights. We await the outcome of the Bill of Rights Forum's discussions which began in December 2006.

Political and Administrative

The suspension of devolved Government has had a significant impact on the agendas of many organisations, including our own. The Northern Ireland (St Andrew's Agreement) Act 2006 paved the way for the return of devolved powers and the beginning of a new type of engagement for NICCY with the political structures in Northern Ireland. The current Review of Public Administration will have an impact on those organisations that deliver services to children and young people, especially in health and social care and education. We will use the opportunities this major review brings to promote the rights and best interests of children and young people in the services they need and seek to make sure any changes do not lead to children and young people being disadvantaged.

We have continued to develop relationships with our fellow Commissioners in England, Scotland, and Wales to develop a clear agreement on our roles and responsibilities. Along with these Commissioners and the Children's Ombudsman in Ireland, we are part of the British and Irish Network of Ombudsmen and Children's Commissioners (BINOCC). In November NICCY hosted the 1st Annual BINOCC Staff Conference. Further information about the role of this group can be obtained on its website, www.binocc.org. This group meets independently but is also a sub-committee of the European Ombudsmen for Children (ENOC), of which we are a member. Further information about the role of this group can be obtained on its website, www.ombudsnet.org.

NICCY has also developed memoranda of understanding with a range of key bodies with whom NICCY must establish formal relationships. NICCY continues to develop memoranda of understanding with a range of key stakeholders. Work is ongoing with a number of other similar bodies to finish these agreements.



Economic and Social

Poverty remains one of the main reasons why many children and young people don't always achieve many of their rights under the UNCRC. We want our work to highlight and challenge the effects of poverty on our children and young people and we will continue to seek improvements.

Social exclusion, arising from sectarianism, racism, homophobia and discrimination against those with a disability, is a significant factor in children and young people's lives in Northern Ireland. We want to ensure that a consistent and co-ordinated effort is made across the public, voluntary and private sectors.

NICCY has a clear duty to advise and where appropriate challenge government and other statutory agencies when services are ineffective or inadequate.

Value for Money

NICCY welcomes the ongoing developments in public sector governance arrangements. These guide our management activities. We use these to minimise risk and ensure effective controls throughout the organisation. NICCY will make further changes to the way we provide services, organise ourselves and are accountable.

Finance and Resources

NICCY receives £1.897 million per year as grant-in-aid from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister. The agreed staffing structure consists of 26 staff and 4 secondees to the Communication and Participation Team. We will continue to work closely with OFMDFM to make sure the level of resources meets what is required to deliver our priorities.

Review of the Office

The review of the NICCY office, which was due to be carried out in 2006/07, was postponed until after the appointment of the new Commissioner. The review will now be carried out in 2007/08. The review will critically examine the justification for the Commissioner on policy grounds and ensure that the Office is effective in its duties and functions. The findings of the review will be available in the year 2007/2008.

Outcomes in 2006/2007

NICCY's Business Plan for 2006/2007 (available at www.niccy.org) identified our planned actions and appropriate measures of success or target. We have provided a detailed indication of how these were achieved.

This information is displayed in two different formats:

- Narrative giving an overview of our work across the year;
- Tables giving detailed information about NICCY's performance (NICCY uses a Balanced Scorecard approach to our Business Plan. The tables reflect what we planned to do in the year 2006–07 and show how we performed). These can be found in the section entitled 'Performance against Business Objectives 2006/07'.

Explaining our work – a flavour of the year

Participation with Children and Young People

NICCY's legislation requires that we encourage children and young people to participate – this means having a say in the decisions that affect their lives; having a say in day-to-day activities such as school; and having a say in society in general.

Throughout 2006/07 the Participation staff have been working with children and young people to help realise that goal. The team met with almost 6,000 children and young people throughout the year. At these meetings the work of NICCY and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child were explained and discussed.

In line with the targets staff rolled out NICCY's anti bullying guidance in 40 schools and started the programme of rolling out NICCY's guidance on developing school councils, completed earlier in the year.

In addition, the team supported the personal development of the NICCY Youth Panel. The Youth Panel is made up of 42 young people from throughout Northern Ireland who advise the Commissioner on issues affecting young people and contribute to the overall work of the Commissioner's office.

In the 12 months covering the report members of the Youth Panel were involved in a wide range of NICCY activity, peer research, sitting on steering groups, being part of NICCY's ethics committee, and importantly, developing their own skills and awareness.

The team supported the Youth Panel's development and work, collaborating with them on projects, including writing, filming, directing and taking part in a multimedia project that will see a DVD of NICCY's work that will be released next year.



To help make sure the NICCY Youth Panel works well for both its members and the organisation we started a review of how it operates. This results and recommendation will be considered during the forthcoming business year.

Reaching out to children and young people, close to where they live, is a culture the team has been developing in all parts of Northern Ireland. Our outreach offices in Derry, Ballymena and Newry means Participation Officers can operate close to local schools, youth groups and other organisations to reach children first hand and then feed back their views back to the Commissioner.

During the year we made sure children and young people had the opportunity to speak to Government ministers directly. Ministers also joined young people in some of NICCY's events

Participation officers also supported other organisations develop good participation practice. For example the team supported the development of PSNI Independent Advisory Groups. These groups help young people explain to the Police Service the problems and issues they face when dealing with the police and help shape local policing plans.

That example like many other aspects of the work of the Participation team shows the positive contribution that can be made by making sure that children and young people have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.

We will continue discussions with key people, to make sure participation of children and young people becomes embedded in new Government structures.

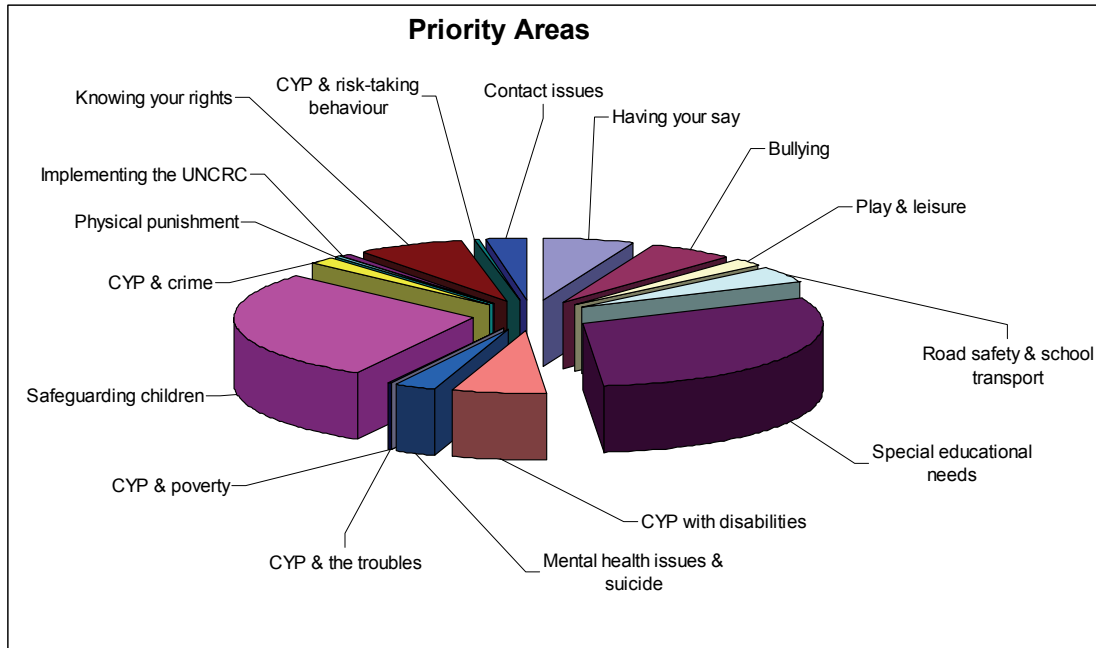
Legal and Complaints

The Legal and Complaints team saw an increase in activity throughout 2006/2007. The Team had attained Lexcel accreditation in March 2006, and went on to retain the accreditation in May 2007 when it was independently re-assessed. Lexcel is the Law Society's quality standard which independently assesses whether or not key practice management standards are met.

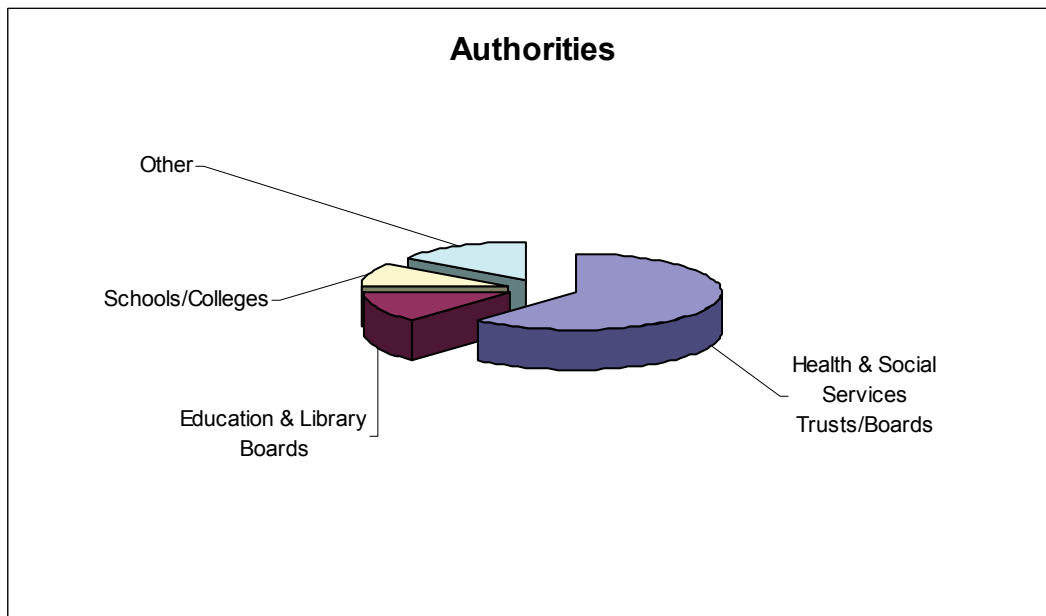
Below are graphs showing the nature of the work carried out by the Legal and Complaints Team, together with real case studies of issues dealt with and some of the feedback received throughout the year.



This table shows how the complaints received are broken down across our 15 key priority areas.



This table shows how the complaints received are broken down according to the relevant authority involved in the cases.



Case Studies

15-year-old with Asperger's

NICCY was contacted by a mother who was worried about her 15-year-old who has Asperger's and attended a mainstream secondary school. He was able to manage well academically with his work but he felt vulnerable at break and dinner time and felt bullied by his peers.

NICCY met with the Principal, the Special Education Needs Co-ordination teacher and the parent. NICCY helped the pupil submit his concerns in writing as he didn't want to attend.

At the meeting it was decided that there would be a classroom available at break time and lunch time with staff supervising where he and his friends could go to use the computer and play games.

He said this decision made him feel much safer and happier at school and he, his parent and the school were pleased with the outcome.

Closure of School

We were contacted by a parent of a child who attended an integrated primary school. The parent was voicing his concerns for his child, and on behalf of a number of other children. A proposal to close the school had been made, without any prior discussion with anyone directly affected by it.

We met with the parent and discussed the various ways in which he, and the other parents, could make sure children's voices could be heard before a decision about the future of the school was made.

We also made representations to the Education Board referring to Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the value of consultation which involved children and young people and their parents, carers and teachers.

Our legal team members also reminded the Board of their statutory duty to properly consult both pupils and parents about this issue.

Following a successful campaign by the children and parents and school, the final decision was that the school should not be closed. The parent wrote to us saying: "All at the school are grateful for the support at our time of need."

Teenager with Anorexia

We were contacted by the mother of a teenage girl with anorexia, who was having difficulties accessing the in-patient care which she believed her daughter desperately needed.

It was clear that the help the girl needed was not available in Northern Ireland.



We wrote to the relevant agencies, and supported the girl and her mother in getting the help she needed.

Subsequently the girl was admitted to a specialist unit in England, where she made progress. Her mother wrote to us as follows:

“Our family cannot thank NICCY enough for what they have done for us. We do believe that our daughter may not have been alive today if it were not for the intervention of NICCY getting her the in-patient care she so badly needed. And for that we are very grateful”

Communicating at NICCY

During the year the Communications and Participation team received the accolade of receiving the Chartered Institute of Public Relations Gold Pride Award as the best in-house team in Northern Ireland.

However, the accolade served as a reminder of the work undertaken by team members to reach out to, communicate with and involve children, young people and their families.

Throughout the year the Communications team worked hard to make sure that the name NICCY and the role of the Commissioner was heard in schools, in the media and delivered into the hands of those who can help the organisation make a difference to the lives of children and young people.

Among the ground-breaking work undertaken was an initiative that saw every year 8 pupil in Northern Ireland receive a keyring emblazoned with contact details for the office.

This was just one of the ways the team helped NICCY reach-out. Others included publications as diverse as research documents, leaflets and the annual review of NICCY’s work, which reached more than 160,000 people.

Of major note was the ongoing popularity of the website (www.niccy.org), which attracted almost 150,000 visits across the year, including 17,000+ in one month. Also the site is proving to be a valuable resource for people seeking information on the lives of children and young people. More 2,000 documents are downloaded each month.

While the media is consistently interested in NICCY and its work (we received 250 media enquiries), the team also proactively encouraged and secured media coverage, with the commissioner completing 50 media interviews on issues including school transport, bullying sexual offenders, young consumers, retention of DNA samples and speech and language therapy.



In supporting the work of NICCY the team managed publication of key reports, as well as landmark documents such as the Aspergers report and Anti-Bullying Guidance for schools.

Throughout the year the staff developed and maintained contact with stakeholders and those who can influence decisions affecting children. The team's programme focussed on sharing key NICCY information and positions with these groups. This included sharing press releases, producing briefings and making sure key members of these groups attended NICCY events.

It was notable with the St Andrew's Agreement in place the team began enhancing its public affairs role in preparation for the return of devolved powers on May 8th 2007.

The work of the Communications team serves to support NICCY meeting its legislative requirements on promoting the office's work and making sure that its role was understood and the office's recommendations could influence policy and legislation.

Research, Policy and Service Review at NICCY

Research is an important part of NICCY's work to inform, influence and challenge Government on where services to children and young people are not good enough, as well as showing where good practice is helping children and young people.

This year saw the Research, Policy and Service Review team undertake work, which produced results for children and young people.

Research, in which NICCY collaborated with other organisations, on school transport was delivered to Government in June. We were delighted, when after publicly announcing the research and communicating directly with Government and stakeholders, many of our recommendations on school transport were adopted in September. This resulted in the ending of three children sharing seats designed for two and investment in the school bus fleet.

One of the issues children and young people raise with NICCY frequently is bullying. After producing research looking at how schools deal with bullying and the effects of bullying the team produced, with colleagues throughout the organisations, guidance for schools. This was piloted in workshops with the Communication and Participation Team and has now been shared with schools throughout Northern Ireland.

During the year we continued our work to influence Government towards ongoing improvements on how adults who work or wish to volunteer to work with children and young people are checked (vetted).



We also undertook and published the finding of a review into how children and young people are allowed to influence and contribute to their care once they are in residential or foster care. Around the same time, NICCY staff assisted the Social Services Inspectorate in the latter stages of the Regional Child Protection Inspection, by obtaining the views and experiences of children and young people who were in care, on the child protection processes. Recommendations made by NICCY are being addressed by Health and Social Services Trusts.

The team's work also included responding to more than 60 consultations, making sure that Government heard NICCY's position on key policy developments.

As part of NICCY's remit in safeguarding and promoting the rights of children and young people under the Convention on the Rights of the child, NICCY prepared and presented a report to the Committee at the annual General Discussion day in Geneva in September 2006, entitled *'To Speak, Participate and Decide-The Child's Right to be Heard'*. We have also been preparing, alongside our UK Commissioner colleagues, for our shadow report to the UN, in preparation for the UK State party hearing by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2008.

The year ended with the publication of landmark research on Asperger's Syndrome, the recommendations of which will, we hope, be adopted by Government.

In all of the work of the research team the priority has been to make sure that children and young people are protected and involved, where possible, in the work.

The team helped establish the Ethics Committee, which checks that our work is both ethical and protects children and young people from risk.

In addition, children and young people have been active participants. Members of the NICCY Youth Panel took part in research steering groups. They were also peer researchers in school transport, anti-bullying and young consumers' research.

Corporate Services supporting NICCY

For NICCY's Corporate Services team the year 2006/2007 represented a period of consolidation, building on previous work that had started.

Major achievements included, with colleagues from the Communication and Participation team, making sure that children and young people from the NICCY Youth Panel took part in all staff recruitment.



Added to this there have been 11 placements at NICCY, providing young people and students with valuable workplace experience.

The team has also been responsible for the continuing development of policies. Over the 12 months nine policies were either reviewed or written. At each monthly staff meeting employees are provided with refresher information on each policy, as well as an introduction and explanation of new policies.

As part of NICCY's commitment to staff support and development Corporate Services supported the completion of appraisals for all relevant staff and made sure that requests for formal training opportunities resulting from appraisals were completed.

In line with the ethos of the organisation to be family-friendly, Corporate Services provided support for staff seeking more flexible working arrangements.

However, as an organisation here for children Corporate Services undertook a lead role in child protection. During the year we signed off on the NICCY Child Protection Policy, trained all staff and dealt with 11 referrals. Corporate Services makes sure that each new NICCY employee is checked using the measures set out in the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults Act (POCVA).

Other areas of work undertaken by the team include the operation of NICCY's financial systems and reporting as well leading on how IT needs are met and making sure that standards in dealing with suppliers are maintained in line with Government requirements.

Risks Facing NICCY

The Statement of Internal Control sets out our risk management process within NICCY and the actions taken in the year 2006/2007 to embed this within the organisation. The NICCY Audit and Risk Committee was established with membership drawn from external representatives, experienced in this type of work. The organisation continued its commitment to sound governance with ongoing internal audit work.

NICCY's Corporate Risk Register identifies 11 risks across the 4 quadrants of the Balanced Scorecard, which is used for our business planning. Four of the risks identified are strategic risks; examples include the impact of impairment of reputation on NICCY's objectives, the risk of impairment of NICCY's independence, and the risk of failing to fulfill the statutory duties within the legislation, with a further risk of legal sanction. The Corporate Risk Register identifies 7 operational risks; examples include child protection issues, judicial review of a decision not to provide financial assistance, and insufficient resources to carry out activities within the Business Plan.



NICCY operates within a dynamic environment and therefore regularly reviews this risk register with the help of the Audit and Risk Committee, to make sure all risks are identified and effectively managed.

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland is a corporate sole. She has an Executive Board of staff consisting of the Commissioner, the Chief Executive, the Head of Research, Policy and Service Review, the Head of Communications and Participation, and the Corporate Services Manager. The Board's primary purpose is to provide leadership, vision, continuity of purpose, and accountability in taking forward and delivering the mission of the Office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People.

NICCY has three reference groups to provide advice and support in key areas, as follows:

- An Audit and Risk Committee, formed in April 2006 with three non-executive members, who were appointed by open recruitment. The primary role of the Committee is to independently contribute to the overall process for ensuring that an effective control system is maintained.
- A Youth Forum with 42 young people from across Northern Ireland; this panel acts as a representative consultation committee to provide the Commissioner with views and opinions of children and young people within Northern Ireland. Members are aged between 12 and 21 and represent different backgrounds and abilities.
- An Ethics Committee, with three independent advisors. The role of the Committee is to ensure all research and service reviews meet minimum ethical standards and are carried out following best ethical practice.

Relationships

Reputation

NICCY continues to enhance its reputation within Northern Ireland, the UK and further a-field. The Commissioner and the Senior Management Team believes that this is important to NICCY's ability to carry out its business. NICCY monitors its reputation by asking children and young people their views, seeking employee's opinion and by monitoring what people say about us in the media and other public forums.

Children and young people

Children and young people are central to the work of NICCY. NICCY's Youth Panel of 42 children and young people is a sounding board and focal point for a range of activities including employee recruitment, our participation work, and steering groups for our research projects.



We carry out satisfaction surveys on our work with the Youth Panel to help us improve how we work and engage with them.

We also carry out surveys on the NICCY and UNCRC Awareness Training that we provide to children and young people in schools and groups across Northern Ireland, as well as monitoring the opinion of young people on a range of issues on our website.

Employees

NICCY continues to develop and expand its range of employee policies and procedures to ensure the effective management and development of our staff. NICCY aims to recruit and retain the best people, with a diverse range of skills, experience and backgrounds, people who are committed to making NICCY successful. NICCY has recently committed to achieving Investors in People accreditation to ensure that staff skills are developed to their full potential. NICCY is also committed to supporting staff in achieving a healthy work-life balance; to this end, NICCY achieved Employers of Choice accreditation. This was achieved through a series of staff consultations, addressing concerns raised and improved internal communication.

Statutory and NGO bodies

NICCY maintains a good working relationship with its sponsoring body, the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, via quarterly liaison meetings and other meetings and discussions as required. NICCY recognises the importance of learning good practice from other Children's Commissioners/ Ombudsmen and is therefore a member of the British and Irish Network of Ombudsmen and Children's Commissioners (BINOCC), and the European Ombudsmen for Children (ENOC). NICCY also has developed relationships with other statutory and NGO bodies, and Memoranda of Understanding with relevant statutory agencies. NICCY hosted the inaugural BINOCC Staff Conference in November, which brought together staff from five Commissioner's offices to discuss best practice and ways to work together. The Commissioner and Chief Executive represented NICCY at a number of European level meetings.

Social, Environmental and Ethical Policies

NICCY is committed to improving the lives of children and young people within Northern Ireland. Children and young people comprise almost a third of the population within Northern Ireland. Taking into account this number, and the number of parents whose lives may be affected by improvements in their child's life, NICCY has a far-reaching role in improving social well-being. NICCY also works on an operational level to improve the skills of young people within the workplace, by offering work placements and work shadowing within NICCY itself.



NICCY is committed to preventing pollution, minimising waste and maximising opportunities to re-cycle and re-use resources. NICCY's objectives for 2007/08 include the development of an Action Plan as part of Government's Sustainable Development Strategy. This Action Plan will include a range of approaches whereby NICCY will develop and implement practical actions which will demonstrate its clear commitment to the reduction of waste and pollution and the increase of re-cycling. As an initial approach, NICCY re-cycles paper, toners and cardboard where possible, and also operates a 'no smoking' policy.

NICCY's Ethics Committee continues its work, providing guidance in maintaining safe working practices when dealing with young people. The role of this Committee is to ensure that all research/reviews undertaken by, or on behalf of, NICCY are conducted in an ethical manner, and to promote innovative ethical practice. The work of this Committee is carried out within NICCY's Ethical Guidelines framework. NICCY has in place a robust Child Protection Policy to assist NICCY staff and volunteers in the protection of children by identifying clear instructions in accordance with the legislative framework of the Children (NI) Order 1995, and the Regional Area Child Protection Committee Procedures 2005.

Future Trends and Factors

There is a range of factors, both short and longer term that may have an impact on the future development of NICCY. These include:

- The review of NICCY's office, to be carried out in the forthcoming year;
- The re-instatement of devolved powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2007;
- The impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review on services that affect children and young people;
- The implementation of the Review of Public Administration, which may lead to changes in the quality of services provided to children and young people;
- The forthcoming research and consultation on our priority areas for the next 3 years (2008-2011) which will shape our work with and for children and young people;
- The challenge of how best we utilise new and emerging technology to communicate and involve children and young people in our work;
- The impact of the Ten Year Strategy and Action Plan;
- The challenge for Government to meet its target to reduce child poverty by 2010.

Financial Result

NICCY received £1.847 million of funding from its sponsoring body for the year 2006/2007. NICCY had net expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2007 of £1,909,685, following a credit of £26,107 in respect of notional costs. This net expenditure resulted in a balance in reserves of £714,565 at 31st March 2007.



Signed by:

Patricia Lewsley

Patricia Lewsley
Commissioner and Accounting Officer



**PERFORMANCE AGAINST BUSINESS OBJECTIVES FOR THE YEAR
 2006-07**

To help readers understand how we have worked to achieve set our objectives we have reproduced our corporate objectives and associated actions. For clarity we have used a ‘traffic light’ system to indicate our progress against our objectives:

- **Green indicates that the corporate objective has been completed**
- **Amber indicates that the objective was partially completed**
- **Red shows that the objective has not been met**
- **Blue that the objective represents ongoing work**

1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
1.1 Listen to and encourage the active involvement and engagement of C&YP and their parents <i>Article 12 of the UNCRC</i>	1.1 A Engage with children and young people and, where appropriate, their parents/carers and / or parents’/carers’ representative groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300 individual face to face meetings with Children and Young people, at pre-school (20%), primary school (40%) and post-primary school (40%) age, their parents or carers, across a range of settings • A minimum of 10% of all interactions will be with children and young people with a disability or with special needs. • Satisfaction levels amongst children and young people and where appropriate, parents, in respect of engagement and participation are high (>85%) as measured by survey



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.2 Influence and improve the law relating to Children and Young People <i>Article 4 UNCRC</i></p>	<p>1.2 A Promote the full inclusion of the UNCRC in the Bill of Rights (BoR).</p> <p>1.2 B Work with Children's Right Alliance England (CRAE) project for the full incorporation of the UNCRC in UK law.</p> <p>1.2 C Following an externally commissioned review on NI legislation, identify gaps (with reference to disparity with other UK legislation), prioritise required changes to legislation and lobby for change in the law in NI in particular in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ RPA ✓ Physical punishment ✓ Special Educational Needs ✓ 'Looked after' children & Children Order ✓ Youth Justice ✓ Child Protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full implementation of the UNCRC in the BoR NI • Involvement of children and young people • Full implementation of the UNCRC in UK Law • Full implementation of the UNCRC in UK Law • All recommendations are actively considered, debated and >75% of key recommendations are accepted



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.2 Influence and improve the law relating to Children and Young People <i>Article 4 UNCRC</i></p>	<p>1.2 D Identify legislative recommendations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child 'Country Report', not implemented since the last hearing and lobby for their implementation.</p> <p>1.2 E Disseminate evaluation of NICCY's powers against the Paris Principles for Human Rights Institutions and inform and influence OFMDFM in the review of NICCY to ensure compliance.</p> <p>1.2 F Monitor casework to identify strategic 'test' cases with the potential to make improvements in legislation relating to Children and Young People.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All recommendations are actively considered, debated and >75% of key recommendations are accepted • All recommendations are actively considered, debated and >75% of key recommendations are accepted • All recommendations are actively considered, debated and >75% of key recommendations are accepted



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.3 Influence and improve policy and practice relating to Children and Young People</p>	<p>1.3 A Prepare for the 'Country Report' to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.</p> <p>Report to the UN study on the right of the child to be heard.</p> <p>1.3 B Publish and promote Schools' Councils guidelines.</p> <p>1.3 C Publish and promote evidence based best practice guidance on bullying with a range of partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with UNCRC • All recommendations are actively considered, debated and all key recommendations are accepted • All NI schools to receive copy of School Council guidelines • Best practice model pilot established in 20 schools • Guidelines adopted by DE • All NI schools to receive copy of Anti-bullying guidelines • Best practice model pilot established in 40 schools • Guidelines adopted by DE



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.3 Influence and improve policy and practice relating to Children and Young People</p>	<p>1.3 D Communicate NICCY's policy position on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Punishment • Play • Mental Health • RPA • Budget and Priorities and CSR • Family Support • Children's Strategy • Poverty • Aspergers • Children's Involvement in Care Planning • Young People's involvement in Inspection • Research and Review • Traveller Children • Anti-bullying <p>Through evidence based responses to policy and other consultations, in meeting Article 7 of the NICCY Order 2003 and through workshops and events following publication of Reports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All recommendations are actively considered, debated and key recommendations are accepted • Key responses include the voice of Children and Young people accessed by NICCY through its Youth Panel and other participatory frameworks



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.3 Influence and improve policy and practice relating to Children and Young People</p>	<p>1.3 E Disseminate findings of report into child protection in boarding schools.</p> <p>1.3 F Review policy developments in GB and make recommendations for policy and service improvements in N. Ireland (including UK wide joint policy work with GB Children's Commissioners)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations are actively considered, debated and key recommendations are accepted by all boarding schools in NI • Policies meet best practice standards and implementation of review recommendations. • Children and young people in Northern Ireland are offered at least the same level of services and/or protection, as children and young people in GB



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.3 Influence and improve policy and practice relating to Children and Young People</p>	<p>1.3 G Monitor casework to identify major policy and service deficits.</p> <p>1.3 H Conduct an attitude survey and awareness campaign in a pre-selected number of retail outlets into how 'child and young person' friendly they are.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from casework • Research completed to time, meeting terms of reference, findings are analysed and clear recommendations made



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.4 Conduct formal investigations under articles 9, 10 and 12 of the NICCY Order</p>	<p>1.4 A Undertake a Formal Investigation of complaints system in one functional area of the criminal justice system.</p> <p>1.4 B Undertake a review of the advocacy arrangements in a number of pre-selected H&SS Trust areas for those children cared for by the Trust who have a profound disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review completed to time, meeting terms of reference, findings are analysed and clear recommendations made • Young people within the juvenile justice system are provided with the information and advice to help them take part in an investigation • Review completed to time, meeting terms of reference, findings are analysed and clear recommendations made • Young people with a profound disability are provided with the support to take part in the investigation



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.4 Conduct formal investigations under articles 9, 10 and 12 of the NICCY Order</p>	<p>1.4 C Commission a review of educational provision for Traveller children.</p> <p>1.4 D Keep under review the need for formal investigations in relation to all issues affecting children and young people</p> <p>1.4 E Monitor casework to ensure issues for formal investigation are identified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review completed to time, meeting terms of reference, findings are analysed and clear recommendations made • Young traveller children are provided with the support to take part in the review • Issues for Formal Investigation are appropriate and meet our criteria • Feedback from casework



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.5 Provide a responsive, accessible and targeted complaints and advice service. Provide targeted assistance to Children and Young People in legal proceedings</p>	<p>1.5 A Provide complaints and advice service to meet agreed casework objectives with clients.</p> <p>1.5 B Support a range of cases in line with legal funding criteria.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • >80% of Casework objectives are achieved • Satisfaction rate of children and young people accessing the service is greater than 90% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • >80% of Casework objectives are achieved • Satisfaction rate of children and young people accessing the service is greater than 90%



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.6 Promote awareness of our work and develop and maintain effective relationships with key organisations.</p>	<p>1.6 A Provide general information and, where appropriate, training in the UNCRC to a range of children and young people and, where appropriate to parents / parents groups and prepare and deliver targeted rights based workshop for Traveller Children and Young People.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5000 children and young people have their awareness about their rights raised are and/or are trained in UNCRC including 1000 visits to NICCY offices and 1000 children and or young people trained through training the trainers • No. of children and young people with special educational needs visiting NICCY offices is proportionate to overall target (>10%) • Satisfaction levels amongst c&yp and where appropriate, parents, in respect of engagement and participation are high (>85%) as measured by survey



1. Our Stakeholders		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>1.6 Promote awareness of our work and develop and maintain effective relationships with key organisations.</p>	<p>1.6 B Develop and maintain a range of formal and informal links with statutory service providers, voluntary and community organisations and groups across Northern Ireland.</p> <p>1.6 C Provide an appropriate communications and public affairs response to all relevant issues.</p> <p>1.6 D Further develop/maintain NICCY website as a key vehicle in communicating NICCY's messages.</p> <p>1.6 E Develop awareness of NICCY across all young people starting post-primary education through the use of age appropriate promotional materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 individual meetings with stakeholder organisations • 15 Key Note speeches • Support from stakeholders is evident in the media and other areas of influence • Levels of positive media coverage inc 25 media interviews • Media opinion is informed by NICCY's response to requests for information • 15% increase on 05/06 baseline in visits to NICCY website • >75% of all children receive promotional materials



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.1 Develop, implement and evaluate a research strategy to inform the work of NICCY</p>	<p>2.1 A Conduct research into the adequacy and effectiveness of sexual health services for young people across NI</p> <p>2.1 B Develop NICCY’s Ethics Policy and Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • induct, develop and support Ethics Committee <p>monitor work undertaken both by NICCY staff and organisations commissioned by NICCY to ensure conformity to the ethical standards of NICCY.</p> <p>2.1 C Support the Research being undertaken by Joseph Rowntree Trust in Northern Ireland on the impact of Poverty on Children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research completed on time, meeting terms of reference, findings are analysed, clear recommendations made and evidence based policy position for NICCY is adopted • Research completed to time, meeting terms of reference, findings are analysed and clear recommendations made • Committee in place and working effectively and all research commences with approval of committee • Research completed to time, meeting terms of reference, findings are analysed and clear recommendations made



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.2 Develop and evaluate a programme of service reviews & investigations using agreed criteria</p>	<p>2.2 A Review the Actions detailed by Government Departments in relation to the Report “ A Right to Protection</p> <p>2.2 B Complete work on the reviews of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health advocacy • Aspergers • Physical punishment • Child Centred Care <p>Disseminate findings and lobby for implementation of recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • >75% of NICCY recommendations are acted upon leading to measured improvements in the rights and best interests of children and young people • All research commences with approval from ethics committee



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.3 Develop, consult on and implement criteria and processes for assisting complainants</p>	<p>2.3 A Maintain criteria for assisting complainants and disseminate to; children and young people, the statutory, private and public legal, voluntary and community sectors</p> <p>2.3 B Further develop redress policy and procedure to include a protocol with OFMDFM on the handling of complaints about NICCY's casework and customer feedback</p> <p>2.3 C Achieve and maintain Lexcel accreditation</p> <p>2.3 D Undertake casework review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • >80%of casework objectives are met • Level of complaints about NICCY service is less than 5% of all cases assisted • Number of strategic cases assisted increases by 15% over 2005/06 baseline • Achieve and maintain external accreditation • Enhanced organisational effectiveness, targeting of resources and consistency with legislative requirements



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.4 Develop, implement and evaluate a communications strategy</p>	<p>2.4 A Raise awareness of NICCY through pro-active media relations.</p> <p>2.4 B Establish a BINOCC working group on Communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% Positive media coverage • 75% of media enquiries responded to within 24 hours • Support from stakeholders is evident in the media and other areas of influence • Evidence of a broad range of media organisations covering NICCY stories • Enhanced collaboration with other Commissioner bodies through meeting twice a year



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.4 Develop, implement and evaluate a communications strategy</p>	<p>2.4 C Utilising results of awareness levels survey:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess recommendations from survey 2. Identify gaps in awareness 3. incorporate findings in ongoing support of NICCY business <p>Plan future communications activity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of NICCY • Recognition rates improve by 100% on baseline over the next two years with both children and young people and adults



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.4 Develop, implement and evaluate a communications strategy</p>	<p>2.4 D Produce appropriate publications / promotional materials to support the work of NICCY including: 1. Annual Report 2. Innovative Annual Review 3. Anti-bullying Guidelines 4. School Council Guidelines 5. Range of other information / promotional / advertising / publication materials 6. Ad hoc advertising and sponsorship as required Production and distribution of NICCY awareness raising materials.</p> <p>2.4 E Run 2 key events to further endorse and promote NICCY's work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce Annual Report including relevant copywriting, design and printing and ensuring report is laid before Parliament (in conjunction with 4.2b(v)) • Publications and promotional items produced and distributed according to timeframe • Support from stakeholders is evident in the media and other areas of influence • Satisfaction rating of 85% for children and young people involved in the events



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.5 Develop, implement and evaluate effective internal policies and procedures</p>	<p>2.5 A <i>Implement Equality Scheme Action Plan.</i></p> <p>2.5 B Maintain and monitor Corporate and Team Risk Registers based on best practice; implement action plan relating to Corporate Services Risk Register.</p> <p>2.5 C Review Financial Procedures and Anti-fraud policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports to SMT on a quarterly basis • Exception reporting • Level of complaints about scheme or services on the basis of Equality Action Plan delivered in accordance with agreed timescales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly report discussed and updated at SMT and at Audit and Risk Committee • No of breaches of best corporate governance practice • Action plan complied with within agreed timescales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of breaches of best corporate governance practice • Exception reporting



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.5 Develop, implement and evaluate effective internal policies and procedures.</p>	<p>2.5 D Review current procedures and write protocols to ensure compliance with Data Protection Act.</p> <p>2.5 E Maintain and develop procedures for compliance with Freedom of Information Act, e.g. research and implement a solution to manage archived e-mail.</p> <p>2.5 F Implement and maintain revised policy on Travel and Subsistence in line with Internal Audit recommendations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of breaches of best corporate governance practice • Policy written and 100% staff trained in same • Exception reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No of breaches of best corporate governance practice • Exception reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exception reporting



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.6 Develop, implement and evaluate a participation strategy with children and young people.</p>	<p>2.6 A In partnership with OFMDFM' children and young people's unit (CYPU) complete audit of existing participation practice, benchmark with other countries and evaluate.</p> <p>2.6 B Development of personal capacity building programmes for Niccy youth panel (NYP) members to enable and empower them to participate in the work of NICCY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction levels of children and young people and parents/carers involved • Audit is inclusive and S75 compliant • Comparison against UNCRC • >85% satisfaction levels amongst children and young people on NICCY panel • In-house peer research training provided to at least 10 panel members • Youth Panel implement Action Plan • Youth Panel Evaluation 2006 complete



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.6 Develop, implement and evaluate a participation strategy with children and young people</p>	<p>2.6 C Using the youth panel evaluation report 2005 and its recommendations, develop an annual youth panel action plan including support for key NICCY activities.</p> <p>2.6 D Implement new youth panel constitution and recruit new members</p> <p>2.6 E Develop working relationships with young people outside the NICCY Youth Panel to support work of NICCY.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth panel numbers maintained and members aware of, and signed up to, the constitution • More young people involved with NICCY, especially among hard-to-reach groups and composition of NICCY panel is inclusive and S75 compliant • Working relations developed with 50 groups



2. How we do things		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>2.6 Develop, implement and evaluate a participation strategy with children and young people</p>	<p>2.6 F Develop young person focused public affairs activity in support of overall public affairs activity.</p> <p>2.6 G Identify how best to engage Children and Young People with a profound disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of NICCY youth panel have opportunity to represent youth panel views to elected representatives • Work in partnership with appropriate agencies to encourage participation of C Y Ps with profound disabilities



3. NICCY staff		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>3.1 To have staff numbers and skill levels required to effectively deliver our services</p>	<p>3.1 A Maintain benchmarked employment within NICCY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Complete recruitment & selection as required ii. Complete recruitment and selection for AA posts iii. Ensure young people are involved in all recruitment exercises iv. Complete monitoring requirements <p>3.1 B Maintain staff turnover at benchmarked % within NICCY.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Implement actions arising from Employers of Choice (EOC) and Investors in People (IiP) programme ii. Implement actions arising from retention policy <p>3.1 C Maintain staff sickness absence at benchmarked % within NICCY.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % rate of staff employed compared to budget • % turnover rate monitored monthly • % sickness absence rate monitored monthly



3. NICCY staff		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>3.1 To have staff numbers and skill levels required to effectively deliver our services</p>	<p>3.1 D Create 6 workplace opportunities for young people within NICCY each year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Implement School Work Experience policy ii. Implement Placement/Volunteer Policy iii. Develop relationships with 5 new placement providers to target young people <p>3.1 E Evaluate secondments for Participation Officers after they have been in post for one year.</p> <p>3.1 F Address and/or support SMT to ensure effective management of individual HR issues, e.g grievance, disciplinary, complaints.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 young people placed within NICCY • Feedback analysis from placements to assess accessibility and quality • Monitoring of placements to ensure diversity and s75 compliance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback analysis from Participation Officers and their employing organisations to assess quality of secondment • Report provided to CE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of HR matters addressed/advised on



3. NICCY staff		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>3.2 Develop our staff in line with best practice & Ensure effective and accountable leadership at all levels in the organisation.</p>	<p>3.2 A Make all staff are aware of internal policies and procedures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review and update policies regularly to ensure legal compliance and best practice ii. Develop training programme to ensure staff are informed regularly about policies and procedures, e.g. at staff meetings iii. Update new staff records to ensure completion of induction iv. Audit personnel records quarterly <p>Record, monitor and evaluate training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of new staff inducted within 3 months of joining NICCY • 100% of personnel records audited quarterly



3. NICCY staff		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>3.2 Develop our staff in line with best practice & Ensure effective and accountable leadership at all levels in the organisation.</p>	<p>3.2 B Develop staff skills to enable delivery of the corporate objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Develop a training policy and procedure. ii. Establish budget for training based on agreed % of total budget iii. Write training plan for the year based upon Individual Development Plans identified within Appraisal system iv. Support SMT in the implementation of Individual Development Plans v. Develop and co-ordinate a range of seminars to share knowledge, skills and experience, e.g. mail merge, excel, etc vi. Record, monitor and evaluate training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of training needs addressed within agreed timetables from Individual Development Plan • 80% of training budget utilised by the year end • Evaluation forms from training events



3. NICCY staff		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>3.2 Develop our staff in line with best practice & Ensure effective and accountable leadership at all levels in the organisation.</p>	<p>3.2 C Appraise staff performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Ensure staff are appraised effectively using appraisal system ii. Review appraisal system iii. Develop 360° appraisal within SMT <p>3.2 D Deliver action plan identified from Investors in People assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Lead liP working group ii. Prepare updates for SMT iii. Ensure relevant documentation completed for liP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% of permanent staff appraised by deadline • Appraisal records received by Corporate Services by 31st March 2007 &- Feedback analysis from all staff appraised for first time • Agreed action plan compiled with within agreed timescales • Quarterly reports provided to SMT



3. NICCY staff		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>3.3 Value staff and support them to achieve an appropriate work life balance</p>	<p>3.3 A Deliver action plan identified from Employers of Choice assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Lead EOC working group v. Prepare updates for SMT vi. Ensure relevant documentation completed for EOC <p>3.3 B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Continue to explore options of alternative work patterns, e.g. job share, and proactively offer these in recruitment ii. Deliver an annual employee award, staff recognition scheme or all-staff team-development event iii. Explore options of working at home iv. Write lone-worker policy and procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed action plan compiled with within agreed timescales • Quarterly reports provided to SMT • Completion of annual employee award event or other recognition scheme • % of staff employed within NICCY under alternative working patterns • Completion of lone-working policy and procedure



3. NICCY staff		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>3.4 Develop a child friendly and child centred culture</p>	<p>3.4 A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Train all new staff in Child Protection issues within six months of joining NICCY ii. Ensure all staff vetted in line with vetting procedure iii. Deliver effective room facilities to external organisations who represent C&YP iv. Co-ordinate training for staff in 'Plain English' writing v. Develop opportunities for staff / Youth Panel engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of staff trained in Child Protection issues • 100% of staff vetted in line with best practice • No of C&YP and organisations representing C&P using NICCY premises per month • Training available to all staff • Members of Youth Panel and NICCY staff have the opportunity to meet on at least one occasion per year



4. Money		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>4.1 Develop, allocate and manage annual budgets to fulfil our priorities.</p>	<p>4.1 A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Draw up budgets for 2007/08 ii. Prepare monthly management account statement for SMT on 06/07 budget iii. Undertake monthly management review of 06/07 budget at SMT <p>4.1 B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Establish software and hardware requirements ii. Support Legal in implementation of Legal Database iii. Identify training needs iv. Review and develop Intranet v. Review and develop robust IT policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget report submitted to SMT & OFMDFM by agreed deadline • Unspent balance at end of year 2006/07 no greater than +5% • NICCY remains within annual 06/07 budget <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project approval sought from OFMDFM by agreed deadline • Intranet in place • Legal and Advice database design and implementation • IT policies developed and 100% staff trained in same



4. Money		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>4.2 Control costs, make effective and efficient use of our resources within budget. Secure funding to maintain & develop our services.</p>	<p>4.2 A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review suppliers for cost-effectiveness and establish tendered services where appropriate ii. Ensure implementation of expenses policy <p>4.2 B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Service Audit and Risk Committee ii. Roll out induction programme for Audit and Risk Committee members iii. Complete internal audit iv. Review and update financial procedures following audit iv. Input to NIAO audit. v. Write and complete annual accounts <p>4.2 C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Complete and submit appropriate in-year bids ii. Submit monthly draw downs iii. Submit quarterly spending reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenses policy completed and 100% staff trained in use of same • Tenders/quotations submitted and agreed within policy • Audit and Risk Committee complies with terms of reference of committee • Induction completed for member • Production of internal audit report within agreed timescale • Production of annual accounts within agreed timescale • All submissions made to OFMDFM within set deadlines



4. Money		
Corporate Objective	Actions	Measure of success & target
<p>4.3 Develop and maintain effective governance arrangements in line with best practice.</p>	<p>4.3 A Risk Management- see 2.5 b</p> <p>4.3 B i. Lead and facilitate quarterly Health and Safety Committee meetings ii. Ensure delivery of action plan arising from meetings iii. Establish programme of H&S training iv. Carry out risk assessments according to action plan v. Maintain H&S information</p> <p>4.3 C Complete work on Article 24 review, promote recommendations to OFMDFM and stakeholders and implement relevant changes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • see 2.5 b • Number of days per annum lost due to accident/ work-related illness • Minutes available from quarterly H&S Committee meetings • Risk assessments available within timescales agreed by Committee • Compliance with international standards – Paris Principles and UNCRC



REMUNERATION REPORT

Remuneration Policy

The remuneration of the Commissioner and the Chief Executive is made in accordance with the Pay Strategy for Senior Civil Servants as set by the Prime Minister following independent advice from the Review Body on Senior Salaries. The remuneration of all senior civil servants is entirely performance-based. The Secretary of State assesses the performance of the Commissioner for Children and Young People, whilst the performance of the Chief Executive is assessed by the Commissioner for Children and Young People, using the formal appraisal system adopted by the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People.

The remuneration of the other members of the Senior Management Team is made in accordance with the pay awards set out by Northern Ireland Civil Service. Remuneration is entirely performance-based, with performance being assessed by the Chief Executive, using the formal appraisal system adopted by the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Service Contracts

The appointment of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland is made by the Secretary of State under Article 5 of the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NI) Order 2003, and in accordance with the recruitment code of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The terms and conditions are as set out in Schedule 2 to the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NI) Order 2003.

Patricia Lewsley was appointed as Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland on 8th January 2007 for a four-year period, with the possibility of renewal for a further term. On 28th March 2006, Nigel Williams passed away, following a period of illness. The Chief Executive, Barney McNeany, was appointed as interim Commissioner with effect from 2nd May 2006 to 7th January 2007.

The other members of the Senior Management Team are direct employees of the Office of the Commissioner; the appointments, which are permanent, are analogous to grades in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) with terms and conditions that are very similar but not necessarily identical to those that apply to the NICS.



Salary and Pension Entitlement (audited)

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Commissioner and Senior Management.

	2006-07		2005-06	
	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)	Salary £'000	Benefits in kind (to nearest £100)
Commissioner				
P Lewsley (Commissioner) Appointed 08/01/2007	15 - 20 (75-80 full year equivalent)	0	-	-
N Williams (Commissioner) Deceased 28/03/2006 Amount in 2006/07 related to outstanding leave	0 - 5	0	75 - 80	3,200
General Management				
B McNeany (Chief Executive) Interim Commissioner between 2 nd May 2006 and 7 th January 2007	75 - 80	0	65 - 70	0
L Kerr (Head of Legal Services and Complaints) Resigned 02/06/2006	5 - 10 (45-50 full year equivalent)	0	45 - 50	0
T Devlin (Head of Research and Service Review)	45 - 50	0	45 - 50	0
M Kinghan (Head of Communications and Participation)	45 - 50	0	45 - 50	0
S Weiniger (Corporate Services Manager)	35 - 40	0	0 - 5 (35-40 full year equivalent)	0

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary, performance pay or bonuses, any allowance such as London Weighting Allowances, to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation. This report is based on payments made by the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland 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. The Commissioner will receive a company car from April 2007 onwards as part of her remuneration package and will be taxed accordingly on this benefit. Mr McNeany did not receive a company car whilst he was Interim Commissioner. The other members of the Senior Management Team did not receive any benefits in kind during the year ended 31st March 2007.

Pension Entitlement (*audited*)

	Accrued pension at age 60 as at 31/3/07 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at age 60 £'000	CETV at 31/3/06 £'000	CETV at 31/3/07 £'000	Real increase in CETV £'000	Employer contribution to partnership pension account Nearest £100
Commissioner						
P Lewsley (Commissioner) Appointed 08/01/2007	0 - 5 no lump sum	0 – 2.5 no lump sum	n/a	5	5	0
General Management						
B McNeany (Chief Executive) Appointed 01/02/2004	10 - 15 plus 40 - 45 lump sum	0 - 2.5 plus 2.5 – 5.0 lump sum	179	237	16	0
L Kerr (Head of Legal Services and Complaints) Resigned 20/06/06	0 - 2.5 no lump sum	0 - 2.5 no lump sum	25	33	2	0
T Devlin (Head of Research and Service Review)	10 - 15 no lump sum	0 - 2.5 no lump sum	129	170	2	0
M Kinghan (Head of Communications and Participation)	15 - 20 no lump sum	0 - 2.5 no lump sum	199	258	0	0
S Weiniger (Corporate Services Manager)	0 – 5 no lump sum	0 - 2.5 no lump sum	19	31	6	0

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 1 October 2002, civil servants may be in one of three statutory based 'final salary' schemes (classic, premium, and classic plus). The schemes are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under classic, premium and classic plus are increased annually in line with changes in the Retail Prices Index.



New entrants after 1 October 2002 may choose between membership of premium or joining a good quality 'money purchase' stakeholder arrangement with a significant employer contribution (partnership pension account).

Employee contributions are set at the rate of 1.5% of pensionable earnings for classic and 3.5% for premium and classic plus. Benefits in classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. For premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum (but members may give up (commute) some of their pension to provide a lump sum). Classic plus is essentially a variation of premium, but with benefits in respect of service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly in the same way as in classic.

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

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website www.civilservicepensions-ni.gov.uk.

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 CETV figures, and from 2003-04 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements and for which the CS Vote has received a transfer payment commensurate with the additional pension liabilities being assumed. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.



Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of 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.

Signed by:



Patricia Lewsley
Commissioner and Accounting Officer



STATEMENT OF COMMISSIONER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Under Schedule 2 11 (1) of the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 , the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland is required to prepare a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis determined by the Department of Finance and Personnel. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland's state of affairs at the year-end and of its income and expenditure, total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the year.

In preparing the accounts the Accounting Officer is required to:

- Observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland will continue to operate.

The Accounting Officer of the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister has designated the Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland as the Accounting Officer. The Commissioner's duties as Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances and for the keeping of proper records, are set out in the Non-Departmental Public Bodies Accounting Officer's Memorandum issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel.

Signed by:



Patricia Lewsley
Commissioner and Accounting Officer



STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

Scope of Responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievements of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in 'Government Accounting Northern Ireland'.

The relationship between the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland and its sponsoring Department, OFMDFM, is set out in the Management Statement. The Management Statement defines the financial and administrative framework within which NICCY operates, sets out the conditions on which grant-in-aid is paid and the delegations within which NICCY operates. The Management Statement is supplemented by the Financial Memorandum agreed with the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland and approved by the Department.

The Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland'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 Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland for the year ended 31 March 2007 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts, and accords with Department of Finance and Personnel guidance.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland has appropriate procedures in place to ensure that it has identified its objectives and risks and determined a control strategy for each of the significant risks. As a result, risk ownership has been allocated to the appropriate staff. More specifically, the Commissioner for Children and Young People:

- Regularly reviewed and updated its corporate and team risk registers;
- Developed a Risk Management Policy, which was formally approved in May 2007. The Policy sets out attitude to risk, reporting mechanisms, responsibilities and stewardship, and criteria to apply when assessing risks;



- Attained Employers of Choice accreditation which focuses on ensuring that employees have an effective work-life balance, which is a key issue in a small team;
- Developed further contingency systems for the IT infrastructure;
- Maintained Lexcel accreditation (May 2007), which reduces risk within the Legal and Complaints Department;
- Installed an information database to more effectively manage contact information with children and young people.

The Risk and Control Framework

The Commissioner for Children and Young People has ensured that procedures are in place for verifying that risk management and internal control are regularly reviewed and reported on. The Commissioner for Children and Young People receives periodic reports concerning internal control. The appropriate steps are being taken to manage risks in significant areas of responsibility and monitor progress reports on key projects.

Following the approval of the Risk Management Policy, we will ensure the delivery of a training programme across teams to ensure that the process is embedded consistently across the organisation and that senior managers in particular are confident when applying the criteria to assess and prioritise risk.

Internal Control Issues

During the year, payments relating to staff costs totalling £1,435 was made by NICCY. This payment was not approved by NICCY's sponsoring department, OFMDFM, due to non-adherence to the terms and conditions within the Financial Memorandum. The payment was approved by the Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letters 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 internal auditors and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland has an internal audit service, provided by the Internal Audit Department of PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC), which operates to standards defined in the Government Internal Audit Manual.



They submit reports, which include the Head of Internal Audit's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland's system of internal control, together with recommendations for improvement. The annual Internal Audit Assurance Statement in respect of the year ended 31st March 2007 provided an overall high assurance in relation to the adequacy of the systems of control in place within the Commissioner for Children and Young People and their operation throughout the period under review.

Signed by



Patricia Lewsley
Commissioner and Accounting Officer



The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland

THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland for the year ended 31st March 2007 under the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NI) Order 2003. These comprise the Operating cost Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cashflow Statement 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 being audited.

Respective responsibilities of the Commissioner and auditor

The Commissioner as Accounting Officer is responsible for preparing the Annual Report, the Remuneration Report and the financial statements in accordance with the Commissioner for Children and Young People for (NI) Order 2003 the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister's directions made thereunder and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. These responsibilities are set out in the Statement of Commissioner's Responsibilities.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements and the part of the remuneration report to be audited in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

I report to you my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and whether the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Commissioner for Children and Young People for (NI) Order 2003 and the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister's directions made thereunder. I report to you whether, in my opinion, certain information given in the Annual Report, which comprises the Directors Report, the Management Commentary, Performance against business objectives for the year and a Remuneration Report, is consistent with the financial statements. I also report whether 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.

In addition, I report to you if the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland has not kept proper accounting records, if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit, or if information specified by the Department of Finance and Personnel regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed.



I review whether the Statement on Internal control reflects the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland's compliance with the Department of Finance and Personnel's guidance, and I report if it does not. I am not required to consider whether this statement covers all risks and controls, or form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. I consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. My responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of audit opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. My audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the Commissioner in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are most appropriate to the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error, and that 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. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited.



Opinions

Audit Opinion

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NI) Order 2003 and directions made thereunder by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, of the state of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland's affairs as at 31st March 2007 and its expenditure for the financial year, the cash flows for the year then ended;
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Commissioner for Children and Young People (NI) Order 2003 and the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister's directions made thereunder; and
- information given within the Annual Report, which comprises the Directors Report, the Management Commentary, Performance against business objectives for the year and a Remuneration Report, is consistent with the financial statements.

Audit 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.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.



*JM Dowdall CB
Comptroller and Auditor General
Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
Belfast*

9th October 2007

**OPERATING COST STATEMENT FOR YEAR
 ENDED 31ST MARCH 2007**

	Notes	Year to 31/03/07 £	Restated Year to 31/03/06 £
Expenditure			
Staff Salaries and Commissioner's Fees	2	(895,497)	(922,306)
Operating Costs	3	(773,513)	(776,323)
Other Costs	4	(266,782)	(370,606)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Expenditure		(1,935,792)	(2,069,235)
Reversal of Notional Cost of Capital	3	26,107	29,698
Expenditure for the financial year		<u>(1,909,685)</u>	<u>(2,039,537)</u>

All amounts above relate to continuing activities.

The notes on pages 69 to 80 form part of these accounts.



BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2007

	Notes	Year to 31/03/07 £	Restated Year to 31/03/06 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Assets	5	631,810	751,445
Current Assets			
Debtors	6	62,578	41,459
Cash & Bank	7	77,514	62,388
		<u>140,092</u>	<u>103,847</u>
Current Liabilities			
Amounts falling within 1 year	8	<u>47,337</u>	<u>78,042</u>
Net Current Assets		92,755	25,805
Total Assets less Current Liabilities		724,565	777,250
Provisions for Liabilities and Charges	9	10,000	0
		<u>714,565</u>	<u>777,250</u>
Financed by			
General Fund	10	<u>714,565</u>	<u>777,250</u>
		<u>714,565</u>	<u>777,250</u>

The notes on pages 69 to 80 form part of these accounts.

Patricia Lewsley

Patricia Lewsley
 Commissioner and Accounting Officer

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR YEAR TO 31ST MARCH 2007

	Notes	Year to 31/03/07 £	Restated Year to 31/03/06 £
Net cash outflow from operating activities	11	(1,771,395)	(1,878,169)
Capital Expenditure:			
Purchases of Tangible Assets	5	(60,479)	(96,316)
Financing:	11(b)	1,847,000	1,897,000
Increase/(Decrease) in Cash		<u>15,126</u>	<u>(77,485)</u>

The notes on pages 69 to 80 form part of these accounts.



NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2007

1. **Statement of Accounting Policies**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Schedule 2 11 (1) of the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and in accordance with the 2006-07 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland. The accounting policies contained in the FReM follow UK generally accepted accounting practice for companies (UK GAAP) to the extent that it is meaningful and appropriate to the public sector.

Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which has been judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The Commissioner for Children and Young People's accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material in relation to the accounts.

1.1 **Accounting Convention**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention. To date there has been no revaluation of fixed assets.

1.2 **Change of Accounting Policy**

With effect from the 2006-07 accounting period, the FReM requires Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) to account for grants-in-aid received for revenue purposes as financing because they are regarded as contributions from a controlling party which gives rise to a financial interest in the residual interest of NDPBs. This is a change in accounting policy from earlier periods when such items were regarded as income. The effect of this change on the certified 2005-06 accounts and the impact of the change on the results of the current year is shown below. Note there is no impact on the net liability of the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People as a result of this change in policy.



	At 31 March 2006 (as previously stated) £	Impact of adopting the new policy £	At 31 March 2006 (restated) £
Net expenditure for 2005-06	(57,324)	(1,982,213)	(2,039,537)
General Reserve	25,805	751,455	777,250
Government Grant Reserve	751,455	(751,455)	0

	At 31 March 2007 (without applying the new policy) £	Impact of adopting the new policy £	At 31 March 2007 (applying the new policy) £
Retained surplus/(deficit) for 2006-07	56,950	(1,966,635)	(1,909,685)
General Reserve	82,755	631,810	714,565
Government Grant Reserve	631,810	(631,810)	0

1.3 Funding

The activities of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland are fully funded by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. Income from other sources is immaterial. Permission must be sought from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister before non-grant income can be applied to the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland's activities. Non-grant income for which departmental approval to use is not forthcoming is surrendered to the Consolidated Fund.

Grant-in-Aid and Grant received used to finance activities and expenditure which support the statutory and other objective of Office of the Commissioner for Children and Young People are treated as financing, credited to the General Reserve, because they are regarded as contributions from a controlling party.



1.4 Expenditure

All expenditure on goods and services fall within the ambit of the Grant-in-Aid and complies with the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland’s Financial Memorandum and government purchasing requirements.

1.5 Fixed Assets

- (a) The fixed asset additions are fully funded by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.
- (b) Tangible fixed assets have been valued at historic cost.
- (c) A capitalisation threshold of £500 is applied.
- (d) Depreciation is provided on tangible assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset evenly over its expected life as follows:

Furniture and Fittings	10 years
Fixtures	10 years
Office Equipment	3 years
IT Equipment	3 years

1.6 Pension Costs

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI). The defined benefit schemes are unfunded and are non-contributory except in respect of dependants’ benefits. The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland 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 Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payments of future benefits is a charge on the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI). In respect of the defined contribution schemes, the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland recognises the contributions payable for the year.

1.7 Value Added Tax

The Commissioner does not have any income which is subject to output VAT. Accordingly the Commission is not VAT registered and cannot recover any input tax.

1.8 Investments

The Commissioner does not undertake any investment activities.

1.9 Stocks

The value of stocks of consumables is immaterial and the Commissioner does not attribute a value for stocks in the accounts.



1.10 Operating Leases

Operating Lease costs are charged to the Operating Cost Statement during the period within which they are incurred.

1.11 Capital Charge

A charge, reflecting the cost of capital utilized by the Commissioner for Children and Young People, is included in operating costs. The charge is calculated at the real rate set by HM Treasury (currently 3.5%) on the average carrying amount of assets less liabilities.

2. Staff numbers and related costs (including Commissioner)

	Notes	Year to 31/03/07 £	Year to 31/03/06 £
Commissioner Fees		99,177	97,687
Staff Salaries		796,320	824,619
		895,497	922,306

2 (a) Commissioner Fees

	Notes	Year to 31/03/07 £	Year to 31/03/06 £
Commissioner Fees		75,902	77,104
Social Security Costs		7,990	8,246
Pension Costs		15,285	12,337
		99,177	97,687

2(b) Staff Costs

	Total £	Employed staff £	2006-07 Others (Agency & seconded) £	2005-06 Total £
Wages and salaries	762,859	548,260	214,599	758,700
Social security costs	47,114	47,114	0	54,422
Other pension costs	85,524	85,524	0	109,184
Total net costs	895,497	680,898	214,599	922,306



The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) (PCSPSNI) is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. A full actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2003. Details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation (www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk).

For 2006-07, employers' contributions of £85,524 were payable to the PCSPSNI (2005-06 £109,184) at one of four rates in the range 16.5 to 23.5 per cent (2005-06: 16.5 to 23.5 per cent) of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The scheme's Actuary reviews employer contributions every four years following a full scheme valuation. The salary bands and contribution rates were revised for 2005-06 and will remain unchanged until 2008-09. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when the costs are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. No employees of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland took up this option.

No employees (2005-06: no employees) retired early on ill-health grounds.

The Commissioner's salary includes taxable benefits in kind but does not include a performance related bonus. The Commissioner is a member of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) on the same basis as all other members of staff. At 31 March 2007 the Commissioner has served 3 months of a 4-year service contract which may be renewed once. At the year-end she would have been entitled to compensation for premature loss of office amounting to the equivalent of 3.75 years' gross salary.

Staff costs include payments totalling £1,435. This payment was not approved by NICCY's sponsoring department, OFMDFM, due to non-adherence to the terms and conditions within the Financial Memorandum. The payment was approved by the Commissioner for Children and Young People.



2(c) Average Number of Persons Employed

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

			2006-07 Number Other (Agency & seconded)	2005-06 Number
	Total	Employed staff		Total
Commissioner	1	1	0	1
General	20	13	7	17
Management	5	5	0	5
	26	19	7	23



3. Operating Costs

	Year to 31/03/07 £	Year to 31/03/06 £
General Costs		
Travel & Subsistence	22,718	14,501
Staff Recruitment	23,949	42,398
Staff Training	26,282	36,607
Postage	4,786	6,446
Telephones	45,111	38,348
Hospitality	6,463	3,678
Audit – external	13,000	11,000
Insurance	8,273	5,486
Miscellaneous	6,161	4,778
Office Consumables	33,877	37,819
Annual Contracts	34,041	34,926
Library	0	313
Legal Costs	7,469	0
Corporate Services	26,729	36,496
	258,859	272,796
Premises Costs		
Rents	157,387	151,303
Rates	69,238	66,413
Service Charge	38,302	35,492
Electricity	20,534	18,879
Cleaning	22,972	20,213
	308,433	292,300
Non-cash Costs		
Depreciation	180,114	181,529
Cost of Capital	26,107	29,698
	206,221	211,227
	773,513	776,323

Corporate Services costs include £2,954 in respect of vehicle operating leases. The rent charge above includes £151,361 in respect of a land and building operating lease.



4. Other Costs

	Year to 31/03/07 £	Year to 31/03/06 £
Communication & Participation	143,595	180,679
Legal and Complaints	60,455	44,804
Research, Policy and Service Review	62,732	145,123
	<u>266,782</u>	<u>370,606</u>

5. Fixed Assets

	Information Technology £	Office Equipment £	Furniture £	Fixtures £	Total 2007 £
Valuation at 31/03/06	217,348	69,188	89,724	771,716	1,147,976
Additions	56,804	3,675	0	0	60,479
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Valuation at 31/03/07	<u>274,152</u>	<u>72,863</u>	<u>89,724</u>	<u>771,716</u>	<u>1,208,455</u>
Accumulated Depreciation at 31/03/06	132,223	51,689	20,963	191,656	396,531
Depreciation for the period	75,511	18,459	8,972	77,172	180,114
Depreciation on disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Accumulated Depreciation at 31/03/07	<u>207,734</u>	<u>70,148</u>	<u>29,935</u>	<u>268,828</u>	<u>576,645</u>
Net Book Value at 31/03/07	<u>66,418</u>	<u>2,715</u>	<u>59,789</u>	<u>502,888</u>	<u>631,810</u>
Net Book Value at 31/03/06	<u>85,125</u>	<u>17,499</u>	<u>68,761</u>	<u>580,060</u>	<u>751,445</u>

Asset financing:



Owned	66,418	2,715	59,789	502,888	631,810
Financed Leased	0	0	0	0	0
On-balance sheet PFI contracts	0	0	0	0	0
PFI residual interests	0	0	0	0	0
Net book value at 31/03/07	66,418	2,715	59,789	502,888	631,810

6. Debtors: amounts due within 12 months

a. Analysis by Type

	31/03/07	31/03/06
	£	£
Prepayments	62,572	40,052
Debtors	6	1,407
	<u>62,578</u>	<u>41,459</u>

b. Intra-Government Balances

	31/03/07	31/03/06
	£	£
Balances with other central government bodies	0	782
Balances with bodies external to government	62,578	40,677
Total debtors and prepayments at 31 March	<u>62,578</u>	<u>41,459</u>

7. Cash at Bank and in Hand

	31/03/07	31/03/06
	£	£
Cash in Bank	77,067	62,253
Cash in Hand	447	135
	<u>77,514</u>	<u>62,388</u>

8. Creditors and Accruals: amounts falling due within 12 months



a. Analysis by Type

	31/03/07	31/03/06
	£	£
Taxation and social security	2,070	408
Sundry Creditors and Accruals	45,267	77,634
	47,337	78,042

b. Intra-Government Balances

	31/03/07	31/03/06
	£	£
Balances with other central government agencies	4,561	30,534
Balances bodies external to government	42,776	47,508
Total creditors and accruals at 31 March	47,337	78,042

9. Provisions for Liabilities and Charges

	Early departure costs	Other	Total
	£	£	£
Balance at 1 April 2006	0	0	0
Provided in the year	0	10,000	10,000
Provisions not required written back	0	0	0
Provisions utilised in the year	0	0	0
Unwinding of discount	0	0	0
Balance at 31 March 2007	0	10,000	10,000

Reconciliation of Movements in Reserve Funds

	31/03/07	Restated 31/03/06
	£	£
As at 1 st April 2006 (as restated)	777,250	919,787
Net expenditure	(1,909,685)	(2,039,537)
Grant-in-Aid received towards resource expenditure	1,786,521	1,800,684
Grant-in-Aid received towards purchase of fixed assets	60,479	96,316
At 31 March 2007	714,565	777,250

10. Notes to Cash Flow Statement



11(a) Reconciliation of result for period to net cash inflow from operating statement

	31/03/07	Restated 31/03/06
	£	£
Expenditure for the financial year:	(1,909,685)	(2,039,537)
Adjustment for non-cash transactions:		
Depreciation	180,114	181,529
Provisions	10,000	0
Adjustments for movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	(21,119)	(10,437)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(30,705)	(9,724)
Net cash inflow/(outflow)	(1,771,395)	(1,878,169)

11(b) Analysis of financing

	31/03/07	Restated 31/03/06
	£	£
Grant-in-Aid received from OFMDFM	1,847,000	1,897,000
Applied towards the purchase of fixed assets	(60,479)	(96,316)
Total Grant-in-Aid towards revenue expenditure	1,786,521	1,800,684

11(c) Reconciliation of cash inflow to movement in net funds

	31/03/07	31/03/06
	£	£
Opening cash	62,388	139,873
Net cash inflow/ (outflow)	15,126	(77,485)
Closing cash	77,514	62,388

12. Financial Commitments



Commitments existed at the 31st March 2007 under operating leases in respect of annual rentals which expire:

Land and Buildings

	2007	2006
	£	£
Within 1 year	4,199	1,000
Within 2-5 years	1,510	1,510
Over 5 years	145,582	145,582
Total	<u>151,291</u>	<u>148,092</u>

Equipment

	2007	2006
	£	£
Within 1 year	-	4,492
Within 2 – 5 years	5,680	-
Over 5 years	-	-
Total	<u>5,680</u>	<u>4,492</u>

Commitments under finance leases £nil.

13. Contingent Liabilities

During the year 2006/07, the Commissioner for Children and Young People initiated a judicial review against the Government in respect of physical punishment. The review is in the early stages and is expected to be listed for hearing in November 2007 at the earliest. Having taken legal advice, the Commissioner for Children and Young People is advised that an amount cannot as yet be estimated in respect of any contingent liability arising from the case.

14. Related Party Transactions

The Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). OFMDFM is regarded as a related party. During the year the Commissioner has various material transactions with OFMDFM and various other bodies for which OFMDFM is regarded as the parent body.





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ISBN 978-0-337-09008-0

