



Commissioner for **Older People**  
for Northern Ireland

# COPNI Business Plan

# 2016/17

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Reviewed August 2016

Amended to reflect confirmed Budget Allocation

Approved by the Commissioner

Submitted to the Department for Communities.

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## **Background**

The Office of the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland (COPNI) was established by the Commissioner for Older People Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, which took effect from January 2011. COPNI is an executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) until May 2016 and then transferred sponsorship to the new Department for Communities. Claire Keatinge, the inaugural Commissioner for Older People completed her term of office in November 2015. OFMDFM completed a public appointment recruitment exercise in March 2016 and the new Commissioner for Older People, Eddie Lynch has taken up post in June 2016.

In the interim the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team have drafted this business plan proposing the work to be taken forward from April 2016 to March 2017. This is the final version of the business plan, agreed with and approved by the Commissioner, taking into account the transfer to Department of Communities and certainty provided by the Department on the allocation of funding for this business year at £817k. The Commissioner wishes to take forward other work in the year that is unaffordable within the current funding allocation. Funding for that work will be sought in-year (2016-17). Should additional funding be made available, subject to business cases and other evidence of need, an addendum to this plan will be provided to the Department.

A previous version of the plan was submitted to OFMDFM in January 2016, in accordance with the requirements set out in the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum between the organisation and its then sponsoring department.

## **Corporate Plan**

The inaugural Corporate Plan 2013-15, *Hope, Confidence and Certainty* linked the actions of the Commissioner directly to the statutory duties and powers set out in the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland Act 2011.

That Corporate Plan set out the key objectives to be achieved by the Commissioner in the first term of office. These objectives were to:

1. Promote positive attitudes towards and about older people;
2. Review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and policy in relation to older people;

3. Promote the provision of opportunities for, and the elimination of, discrimination against older people;
4. Encourage good practice in the treatment of older people; and
5. Ensure effective, efficient and economical good practice in corporate governance.

At the time of drafting this business plan, a new set of Corporate Plan priorities is well advanced and the Commissioner is spending the early autumn engaging with older people on those priorities. When the engagement is complete the Commissioner will submit a new draft Corporate Plan to the minister for Communities for approval and published thereafter. The new Corporate Plan will cover the period 2016-2020.

## **International Framework**

COPNI's work is underpinned by the UN Principles for Older Persons (1991). These international standards are important as COPNI assesses how well public bodies and other organisations deliver services for older people here in Northern Ireland.

## **Business Plan 2016/17**

This business plan sets out the business activities that can be taken forward in 2016/17. As with previous business plans, it identifies the key programmes of work to be undertaken and the targets to be met during the course of the year. The purpose of the business plan is to clearly demonstrate the level of progress required in-year towards the achievement of the Commissioner's priority objectives. Progress towards the achievement of these targets and objectives will be monitored closely and reported on throughout the business year.

The Chief Executive will ensure appropriate monthly, quarterly and annual performance management processes are implemented as necessary.

## Internal Unit Plans

This business plan is supported internally by detailed plans at sub-division level and individual project plans where appropriate. These are developed by each division head and agreed with all members of the team taking forward the work. In turn each plan filters down to individual work plans and personal agreements of the Commissioner's staff. All internal planning includes an analysis of the risks attached to each individual project.

Internal plans have been reviewed and amended in accordance with this amended business plan and budget.

## Resource Assumptions

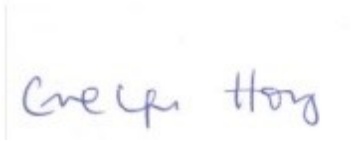
At the time of review (August 2016) COPNI has been informed that the budget for 2016/17 is £817,000. This comprises £807,000 resource and £10,000 depreciation. The budget broadly covers three elements of expenditure, staff costs (£635,000), overheads (£161,000) and programme costs (£21,000). In the last three years all possible efficiencies in staff costs and overheads have been made. The baseline funding provided in 2016/17 **remains very challenging. Underfunding at this level directly affects the capacity of the organisation to fulfil the statutory duties set out in the Commissioner for Older People (NI) Act 2011. The Commissioner and the Department for Communities are in negotiation to increase funding in-year, should funds become available.**

Operational work which is of a day-to-day or continuous nature can be taken forward this year. This includes legal casework dealing with enquiries from older people, research and consultation-response capacity of the research and policy advice team and the operational aspects of the governance of the organisation. This also included all of the governance work set out in Priority 5, which is essential to comply with all Accounting Officer responsibilities and Managing Public Money NI. A proportionate approach is taken but this work is inevitably expensive for the size and scale of this organisation.

The second type of work that has been prioritised in this business plan is work that either progresses the development, consultation and engagement with older people on the new Commissioner's Corporate Plan, or that underpins projects to be undertaken in the new Corporate Plan that require immediate commencement, such as research by technical experts.

A budget is included at the end of this plan, attaching budget lines to the specific pieces of work that can be taken forward within the limited available resources.

COPNI will continue to exercise flexibility around the movement of budget and human resources across the business plan as required. Any other external sources of funding that may be available will be explored but prudence is required in considering non-governmental sources of funding that could impact the reputation or independence of the Commissioner.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Evelyn Hoy". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name.

**Evelyn Hoy**  
**Chief Executive**

## Objective 1 Promote Positive attitudes towards and about older people

Ref No.	Project	Statutory Requirement	Aim (Expected impacts)	Lead Officer	Outputs	Key Performance Indicators
1.1	Maximising Income through the Uptake of Benefits Programme	COPNI Act 2011	To reduce levels of pensioner poverty by increasing the levels of "uptake" of the benefits by older people and those who care and support them.	Evelyn Hoy	COPNI to continue to support the "Make the Call" campaign run by DfC	COPNI endorsement of the message for the 16-17 advertising campaign Impact data from ongoing monitoring of the existing campaign

## Objective 2

### Review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and policy in relation to older people

Ref No.	Project	Statutory Requirement	Aim (Expected impacts)	Lead Officer	Outputs	Key Performance Indicators
2.1	Responding to public consultations by relevant authorities regarding matters that may impact older people and those who care for them.	COPNI Act 2011	To continue to raise issues of relevance and importance to older people to all relevant public authorities through their public consultation exercises.	Emer Boyle	Issues of importance to older people, their families, relatives and carers are robustly represented at the heart of public policy and services.	Consultation responses are submitted on time to the relevant authorities and to the professional standard expected from COPNI.
2.2	Responding to individuals who contact the Commissioner for assistance  <b>NOTE: Capacity in this area will be restricted by the allocated budget and may require refusal to take on new cases.</b>	COPNI Act 2011	To continue to accept cases for further investigation in accordance with the case acceptance policy.  To act as an “independent champion” for older people who are experiencing difficulty in their interaction with other public authorities.	Evelyn Hoy	Conducting the investigation of cases for individual older people in compliance with all internal policies and good practice.  Log of live casework fully updated as enquiries arise.  Regular supervision	95% compliance to Case Acceptance policy.  95% compliance to call handling and signposting policy.  Maintenance of log of incoming enquiries with 99% accuracy.  Fortnightly reporting of case work progress to Chief Executive.



## Objective 2

### Review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and policy in relation to older people

Ref No.	Project	Statutory Requirement	Aim (Expected impacts)	Lead Officer	Outputs	Key Performance Indicators
					<p>meetings with Chief Executive (CE) and, as required, with Senior Management Team (SMT).</p> <p>Full compliance with any amendments to policy or procedure arising from 2013/14 internal audit.</p>	<p>Quarterly caseload review (deep dive), monitoring by Chief Executive.</p> <p>Monthly reporting of enquiries and caseload statistics to SMT meeting.</p> <p>Implementation of any changes required by the 2016/17 internal audit of casework.</p>
2.3	To provide advice to government regarding the experience of older people who are victims of crime and why crime clearance rates for older people remain low in Northern Ireland compared to	COPNI Act 2011	To raise awareness of the impact of crime against older people and to work with the criminal justice system to challenge and support them in improving the clearance rates for crimes against older people.	Emer Boyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of definitions of crime clearance;</li> <li>- Comparison of crime clearance rates in Northern Ireland with other comparable jurisdictions;</li> <li>- Examination of PPS criteria and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Analysis of Academic Expert / Research report commissioned and completed in 2015/16.</li> <li>- Key challenges / areas for change identified</li> </ul>

## Objective 2

### Review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and policy in relation to older people

Ref No.	Project	Statutory Requirement	Aim (Expected impacts)	Lead Officer	Outputs	Key Performance Indicators
	similar crimes for other demographic groups.				impact on decisions taken.	
2.4	Safeguard and Protect Older People from Abuse –the risk of Financial Abuse of Older People in Northern Ireland.	COPNI Act 2011	To increase understanding of the prevalence of <u>financial</u> abuse perpetrated against older people in N. Ireland.	Emer Boyle	Promote awareness of the prevalence of financial abuse through scams and cold calls to older people in NI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Academic Expert / Research report commissioned</li> <li>- Key challenges / areas for change identified</li> </ul>
2.5	Safeguarding of Older People in Northern Ireland. (legislation)	COPNI Act 2011	Continue to press for the introduction of a Single Adult Safeguarding Bill for N. Ireland through the relevant mechanisms at the NI Executive departments and legislative Assembly.	Evelyn Hoy	Seek inclusion of a commitment to new legislation in the forthcoming PfG	Commissioner to raise the recommendation for a Safeguarding Bill with new Ministers for Health and Justice and provide evidence to the relevant Assembly Committees before and during the consultation on the new Programme for Government.

## Objective 2

### Review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and policy in relation to older people

Ref No.	Project	Statutory Requirement	Aim (Expected impacts)	Lead Officer	Outputs	Key Performance Indicators
2.6	Review the adequacy of emerging policy proposals from DHSSPS on the issue of Continuing Healthcare	COPNI Act 2011	To ensure that the emerging policy guidance is adequate and is applied consistently across N. Ireland.	Evelyn Hoy	<p>Liaison with Department of Health officials undertaking the review of the extant guidance.</p> <p>Expert advice to policy makers pre, during and post consultation on the emerging policy proposals.</p> <p>Provision of the evidence adduced from individual cases seeking support from the Commissioner.</p> <p>Engagement with older people directly impacted by the current lack of clear guidance.</p>	Increased awareness at Departmental and Assembly Committee level on the issue of Continuing Health Care and the financial and care impacts of the emerging policy proposals on older people living in care settings.

**Objective 2**  
**Review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and policy in relation to older people**

<b>Ref No.</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Statutory Requirement</b>	<b>Aim (Expected impacts)</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>
2.7	Analysis of the Contracts between HSCT and private sector nursing and residential homes – increased protection for older people.	COPNI Act 2011	Research into the legal status of the older people at the heart of the contracts between HSCT and care providers in residential settings.	Emer Boyle	Advice to government on adequate protection of the rights of older people in residential settings and the human rights implications of current mechanisms.	Evidence of inadequate protection against eviction for older people in residential settings.

**Objective 3**  
**Promote the provision of opportunities for, and the elimination of discrimination against older people**

<b>Ref No.</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Statutory Requirement</b>	<b>Aim (Expected impacts)</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>
3.1	Active Ageing Strategy (AAS)	COPNI Act 2011	Monitor the operationalization of the Strategy within the new Departmental arrangements  Advise government on the progress of the Strategy to effect positive change for older people.	Emer Boyle	Review of Executive Departments' delivery of relevant parts of the Strategy.	Report to government on the operation/impact of the Strategy at end of 2016.
3.2	Age Goods, Facilities and Services (AGFS)	COPNI Act 2011	To continue to lobby Government for the introduction of this legislation.	Evelyn Hoy	Advice to government on development or setbacks in regard to introduction of Bill.	Progress of Age GFS Bill.

**Objective 4  
Encourage best practice in the treatment of older people**

<b>Ref No.</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Statutory Requirement</b>	<b>Aim (Expected impacts)</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>
4.1	Examine and scope levels of Digital Inclusion of Older People in public life across N. Ireland	COPNI Act 2011	To scope the extent of digital inclusion projects and activities involving Older People across N. Ireland with a view to identifying specific gaps / barriers to inclusion.	Emer Boyle	Desk review of the levels of digital inclusion/exclusion of older people in NI.  Consideration of a larger project for inclusion in the new Corporate Plan	Internal report on digital inclusion for older people to determine the inclusion of this issue in a new Corporate Plan.

**Objective 5**  
**Ensure effective, efficient and economical good practice in corporate governance**

<b>Ref No.</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Statutory Requirement</b>	<b>Aim (Expected impacts)</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>
5.1	Development and monitoring of annual business plans  Development of a Corporate Plan for COPNI 2016-20	Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) COPNI Act 2011	To develop and gain approval from DfC of an annual business plan. To develop, engage with older people, submit to Department For Communities and gain approval of a new Corporate Plan for COPNI for the period 2016-20.	Chief Executive	Annual COPNI business plan 2016/17  Engagement programme with Older People to consult on the Commissioner's priorities and take the views of older people.	Delivery of internally approved business plan.  Approval and publication of a Corporate Plan for COPNI 2016-20.
5.2	Preparation and management of annual, quarterly and monthly budgets	Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM)	Ensure that management information setting out the monthly budget profile, drawdown and consumption of funding are available to the SMT for consideration at their monthly meeting.  To ensure the Accounting Officer can access and	Chief Executive	Receive and check all management information in relation to the budget before submission to the Accounting Officer.  Advice and guidance to the Accounting Officer on all financial matters	To deliver COPNI annual spend ensuring zero overspend, and underspend not exceeding 1.5% of COPNI's opening allocation.  To deliver a suite of management accounts that requires no amendments to their structure.

## Objective 5

### Ensure effective, efficient and economical good practice in corporate governance

Ref No.	Project	Statutory Requirement	Aim (Expected impacts)	Lead Officer	Outputs	Key Performance Indicators
			understand all elements of the budget process as and when required.		relating to COPNI spend.	
5.3	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)	Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM)	To appoint/re-appoint a committee to advise the Commissioner on Audit and Risk Assurance by June 2016.	Chief Executive	To complete the appointment/re-appointment process.  Commissioner to approve the appointment/ re-appointment of members	Members to be informed of outcome May 2016.  New ARAC committee to meet June 2016.
5.4	Continued development of good practice in financial management and planning, risk management and internal control	Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM)	Ongoing review and improvement of the COPNI Financial Manual.  Training and development for non-finance staff as required, ensuring effective financial management.	Finance and Governance Manager	Satisfactory Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) audit reports. Efficient Treasury management. Accurate financial statements and accounts.	Compliance with all Department of Finance and Personnel and Treasury guidance.  Satisfactory internal audit reports. 90% of internal audit recommendations implemented by agreed target date.



## Objective 5

### Ensure effective, efficient and economical good practice in corporate governance

Ref No.	Project	Statutory Requirement	Aim (Expected impacts)	Lead Officer	Outputs	Key Performance Indicators
			<p>Ensure effective management of risk.</p> <p>Quarterly reporting of risk management to the ARAC.</p>		<p>Minimal risk of financial misappropriation. Pension and HMRC returns.</p> <p>Efficient and effective internal control environment.</p>	<p>Quarterly reporting of risk management register to all risk holders and ARAC</p>
5.5	Compliance with information security and Data Protection (DP) and is compliant with Health & Safety (H&S) regulations	Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM)	<p>Completion and review of all information management policies and procedures to ensure compliance. To ensure compliance with all Health and Safety statutory duties.</p>	Finance and Governance Manager	<p>Provide assurance to the SMT that all compliance with Freedom of Information (FOI), DP and Equality Monitoring obligations is in place.</p> <p>Safe and healthy working environment for the Commissioner and his team.</p>	<p>Monitor policies and procedures in accordance with audit and statutory obligations.</p> <p>Act as Information Manager for all enquiries and outgoing information releases.</p> <p>Convene and chair twice yearly formal meetings of the Information Group and report to SMT on FOI,</p>

**Objective 5**  
**Ensure effective, efficient and economical good practice in corporate governance**

<b>Ref No.</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Statutory Requirement</b>	<b>Aim (Expected impacts)</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>
						<p>DP and Equality Monitoring.</p> <p>No adverse health and safety incidents in year.</p> <p>All Health and Safety Certification fully up to date.</p>
5.6	Mandatory Training and Development (T&D) of staff	Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM)	To undertake a skills audit of all permanent staff and develop a T&D plan for the year.	HR Officer	Skills Audit.	<p>To deliver the completed Skills Audit to CE by end of Q1.</p> <p>To prioritise the mandatory training and development and the continuous professional development of staff.</p> <p>To monitor and report on T&amp;D monthly.</p>

## Objective 5

### Ensure effective, efficient and economical good practice in corporate governance

Ref No.	Project	Statutory Requirement	Aim (Expected impacts)	Lead Officer	Outputs	Key Performance Indicators
5.7	Website External Communications	COPNI Act 2011	To ensure the ongoing maintenance and functionality of COPNI's website and social media channels.	C&E Manager	<p>Relevant and up to date information to be available on website.</p> <p>Any required improvements in functionality of website to be implemented.</p> <p>Regular updating of social media channels to communicate key messages and relevant information.</p>	<p>Regular review of website for accuracy and relevancy.</p> <p>Planned engagement using social media channels.</p> <p>Monthly review of social media activity.</p>
5.8	Records Management	Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM)	<p>To ensure that an up to date and secure records management policy and procedure is in place to assist good governance.</p> <p>To determine if a records management</p>	Catherine Hewitt	Detailed project plan considering the integration of MS 2013 and establishment of a working group and steering group by end of Q1.	Best practice in records management including the use of applicable software.

**Objective 5**  
**Ensure effective, efficient and economical good practice in corporate governance**

Ref No.	Project	Statutory Requirement	Aim (Expected impacts)	Lead Officer	Outputs	Key Performance Indicators
			system is required and if so, to procure and install a suitable system.		Updated and approved record management procedures and policies by end of Q2. Scoping paper setting out options, recommendations and costing by end of Q3	

## 2016/17 Projected Expenditure

16/17 Salaries		635,320
Non-Discretionary Expenditure		7,826
Overheads		143,284
<b>Commissioned work</b>		
Obj 2.4 Publication of Prevalence Study	2,500	
Obj 2.6 Legal advice - Continuing Healthcare policy	3,000	
Obj 5.1 Corporate Plan 2016-2020	12,000	
Obj 5.1 Engagement – Photographer/Xmas Card Competition	770	
Obj 4.1 Digital Inclusion Report	2,300	
		20,570
<b>Total projected expenditure excluding depreciation</b>		<b>807,000</b>
Depreciation		10,000
<b>Total projected expenditure including depreciation</b>		<b>817,000</b>