



Business Plan 2021-'22

Context

The Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) was established under the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. NICCY is an executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Department for Communities.

The Commissioner's full designated powers took effect from 1 October 2003. The Commissioner is Koulla Yiasouma. Date of appointment: 2 March 2015. Term of Office: 4 years renewable once.

Mission

NICCY's Mission is:

“To safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young people”

Vision

NICCY's Vision is:

“A society where the rights of all Children and Young People are respected and realised”

STATUTORY DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE COMMISSIONER

Article 6(1) of the 2003 Order established the Commissioner's principal aim - i.e. NICCY's mission: *To Safeguard and Promote the Rights and Best Interests of Children and Young Persons.*

- ❖ The Commissioner's paramount consideration shall be the rights of the child or young person.
- ❖ The Commissioner shall have regard in particular, to the ascertainable wishes and feelings of the child or young person (considered in light of age and understanding).
- ❖ The Commissioner shall have regard to the importance of the role of parents in the upbringing and development of their children; and any relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

NICCY will exercise the powers inherent in the role in fulfilment of the duties, as set out in legislation. In summary these are set out below:

Article 7 of the 2003 Order outline the duties of the Commissioner which are:

- To promote an understanding of the rights of children and young persons.
- To promote an awareness of the importance of those rights and a respect among children and young persons for the rights of others.
- To promote an awareness of matters relating to the best interests of children and young persons.
- To keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice relating to the rights and welfare of children and young persons.
- To keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of services provided for children and young persons by relevant authorities.
- To advise government and relevant authorities on matters concerning the rights or best interests of children and young persons.
- To take reasonable steps to ensure that children and young persons and their carers are made aware of the functions of the Commissioner, the location of her office and the ways in which they may communicate with the Commissioner.
- To take reasonable steps to ensure that children and young persons are encouraged to communicate with the Commissioner.
- To take reasonable steps to ensure that the content of any matter published by the Commissioner takes account, so far as practicable, of the age, understanding and usual language of any children or young person by whom it is intended that such matter will be read and of the effect of any disabilities they may have.
- To take reasonable steps to ensure that the views of children and young persons and their parents are sought concerning the exercise by the Commissioner of her functions.
- To take reasonable steps to ensure the services of the Commissioner are, so far as practicable, made available to children & young persons in the locality in which they live.

Articles 8-15 outline the Commissioner's general powers which are to:

- Undertake, commission or provide financial or other assistance for, research or educational activities concerning the rights or best interests of children and young persons or the exercise of her functions.
- After consultation with such bodies as she thinks appropriate, issue guidance on best practice in relation to any matter concerning the rights or best interests of children or young persons.
- For the purpose of any of her functions, conduct such investigations as she considers necessary or expedient.
- Compile information, provide advice and publish any matter concerning the rights and best interests of children and young persons, including the outcome of any research or investigation and any advice provided by the Commissioner.
- Make representations or recommendations to any body or person about any matter concerning the rights and best interests of children and young persons.
- Conduct general reviews of advocacy, complaint, inspection and whistle blowing arrangements of relevant authorities.
- Review advocacy, complaint, inspection and whistle blowing arrangements of relevant authorities in individual cases.
- Provide assistance with complaints to relevant authorities.
- Conduct investigations of complaints against relevant authorities.
- Bring, intervene in or assist in legal proceedings.

Corporate Plan 2020-'23 & Corporate Plan 2021-23 As Revised and Updated

The Corporate Plan 2020-'23 links directly to the statutory duties and powers of the Commissioner for Children and Young People as enshrined within the legislation which established the Office of Commissioner i.e. the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and sets out the desired outcomes across identified key priorities. Our Plan was revised and updated for 2021-23 to reflect the impact of Covid-19. Mindful of the outcomes based accountability approach adopted in the draft **Programme for Government** and the **Children's and Young People's Strategy**, NICCY's approach is as previously, also outcomes based.

Business Plan 2021-'22

This Business Plan links directly to the Corporate Plan 2020-'23 and is Year 2 of same. As such, it identifies the key objectives and SMART targets/outputs to be met/delivered during the course of the year based on the 6 high level corporate objectives including key performance indicators and verification methods.

NICCY will ensure reference to changing political / public sector developments, new Programme for Government, Children's and Young People's Strategy and liaison with our sponsor department - both in terms of our accountability and our monitoring roles - as they impact on outcomes for Children and Young People.

Business Plan implementation, progression and reporting is the responsibility of the Chief Executive. Progress towards the achievement of these targets and objectives will be monitored closely and reported on throughout the business year by the Senior Management Team (SMT*) and the Leadership & Management Team (LMT**) who will ensure accurate monthly, quarterly and annual reporting, adopting an Outcomes Based Approach.

Programme for Government outcomes

As an Arms Length Body (Sponsor Dept: the Department for Communities), NICCY supports the delivery of key Programme for Government outcomes - in keeping with our independent role and statutory duties and powers - notably Outcome 12: 'We give our children and young people the best start in life', whilst recognising that all outcomes impact on the rights, lives and outcomes for children and young people in NI.

Internal Departmental Work plans

This Business Plan is supported by more detailed departmental plans.

Fundamental Principles

Participation of Children and Young People: The importance of the involvement and participation of children and young people in all relevant aspects of the realisation of our business plan targets is of primary consideration to NICCY and is embedded throughout each of the corporate and business objectives where appropriate/possible. NICCY has also revised and updated guidance on participation for government departments and statutory agencies in line with good practice and current thinking.

Stakeholder Engagement: NICCY recognises the necessity to work with and involve our Stakeholders across all relevant spheres i.e. in the political, public, statutory, NGO, community and voluntary sectors. This is reflected in integrated working, partnerships, co-operation, openness, accountability and information

sharing. We have developed a Stakeholder Engagement Strategy in parallel with our Corporate Plan period, setting out how we work with all those with whom we work in achievement of our mission.

Child Rights Focus/Approach in our Work: NICCY was established to support the protection, promotion and adherence to children's and young people's rights with due regard to the UNCRC. The application of these to legislation, strategy and policy development by Government is a key driver in all we do. We continue to apply UNCRC principles i.e. Articles 2, 3, 6 and 12 to our work and to ongoing improvement of our own practice in reflecting international rights standards and approaches.

Programmes of Work

Programmes of work aim to promote integrated, inter disciplinary working thereby enhancing our own internal efficiency and project management effectiveness significantly increasing our external impact and outcomes for Children and Young People. The 'Core Business' of NICCY is carried on via each 'functional area' throughout the year. Utilisation of the Organisation's greatest asset i.e. its people's skills, knowledge and expertise will be utilised to best effect in achieving NICCY's aims and objectives.

Priorities and Flexibility

NICCY acknowledges the requirement for this plan to be flexible to take account of changing priorities and circumstances, both internally and externally and will review and respond accordingly throughout the business year.

Resource Assumptions

This Business Plan has been prepared on the basis of the assumptions – as set out in the 2020-'23 Corporate Plan - that it would be delivered within NICCY's staffing and budget requirements. In the current climate of ongoing budget cuts and required savings, we are facing budget reductions going forward. These cuts have meant staffing reductions and organisational restructuring, whilst bearing in mind the necessity to ensure effective delivery on the Statutory Duties and Powers of the Office.

Governance and Risk Management

NICCY will ensure adherence to and ongoing review of good governance systems including effective risk management in the delivery and implementation of this business plan.

Key: NICCY – Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children & Young People; CE – Chief Executive; HoD – Head of Department; DP – Deputy Principal; CS – Corporate Services; L&I – Legal & Investigations; P&P – Policy & Participation.

*The Senior Management Team (SMT) comprises Chief Executive and Head of Department.

**The Leadership & Management Team (LMT) comprises Chief Executive, Head of Department and Deputy Principal Officers.

NICCY BUSINESS PLAN 2021-'22: Corporate Plan Objective 1

HLCO 1: To ensure that children's rights are respected, promoted and protected in the work of all duty bearers.			
Key Outcome: NICCY's work influences Government and its Agencies to more effectively deliver in compliance with children's rights and best interests at local, national and international levels while progressing the implementation of UN General Measures of Implementation (as per GC No. 5).			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
1.1	Highlight and Promote Key Child's Rights issues at Local, National and International levels.	SOCRNI 2 Monitor progress NICCY's 2 nd 'Statement on Children's Rights in NI'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress on NICCY Calls reported in our Monitoring Tables by Staff Leads.
		UN CRC's Concluding Observations Monitor NI Executive / Departments' progress on. 2016 Concluding Observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress on COs including NICCY's responses.
		UNCRC Periodic Reporting NICCY input to plan to inform UK State Party reporting process including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise and host potential visit of UNCRC Taskforce members to NI (timescale tbc); Monitor NI Executive's input to UK State Party Report (due Jan' '22); Begin draft of NICCY's input to UK Commissioners' Report in 	The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child is informed by NICCY at relevant stages of the periodic reporting process on key rights breaches / issues as per UNCRC implementation in Northern Ireland.

		<p>response to UK State Party Report (due May '22)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with C&YP in advance of Period' Exam'n in Sept' '22. 	
1.2	Progress UNCRC General Measures of Implementation.	<p>Review of Legislation Monitor/progress in relation to NICCY's Article 24 Report recommendations following Ministerial commitment to progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress on work iro implementation of recommendations.
		<p>Incorporation of the UNCRC Build on Advice to Government on the incorporation of the UNCRC into legislation for NI.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project plan on engagement with relevant stakeholders including Ad Hoc Committee on BoRNI as per NDNA and CYP; Commitment by MLAs and Political Parties for incorporation of the UNCRC.
		<p>Child Rights Impact Assessments Build on dissemination / meetings held in 2020-21 iro ENOC CRIA Statement and Framework and provide advice to relevant authorities on undertaking Child Rights Impact Assessments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 'advice to government' now contains reference to the CRIA Statement and Framework; Further training for Depts' Officials on CRIAs' Framework implementation taken forward; Training seminar developed for inclusion in NICS LinKs online portal. Relevant authorities are aware of / begin to undertake CRIAs in developing policies, services and legislation.
1.3	Apply learning from CRIA on Covid-19 - ENOC 2021 Theme	<p>ENOC 2021 Input to ENOC position statement as required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May Seminar/Workshops; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Input to ENOC Theme development;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept Annual ENOC Conference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position Statement / Calls on 'Covid CRIA' disseminated to NI Government and NI Departments.
		ENYA 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NYP participation in ENYA Project on ENOC Theme - 'the impact of COVID-19 measures on children's rights.' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NYP members' input to ENYA project to provide advice/input to the drafting of ENOC position Statement.
1.4	Monitor and advise on implementation of Children's Services Co-operation Act (CSCA) (2015) including via 10 Yr Children's & Young People's Strategy (CYPS) Delivery Plan	<p>Advise on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of delivery plans in advance of consultation; indicator set, including data development agenda; development of Participation policy/mechanism; integration with Programme for Government; Monitor and advise on compliance with CSCA across relevant NI Depts as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice provided on CYPS Delivery Plan; Advice on indicators set and DDA; Participation policy/mechanism finalised; CYPS and PfG connections promoted via relevant mechanisms; Children's Rights reflected in the outworking / implementation plans of the CYPS and relevant CYP Legislation/Strategies/Policies in line with the CSCA.
1.5	Monitor impact of 'Brexit' on the rights of Children and Young People.	<p>Maintain a watching brief iro impact of Brexit on children's and young people' Rights and advise Government / relevant monitoring bodies as / when necessary.</p> <p>Departmental Roundtable Meetings on their work iro Brexit issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring progress on NICCY Calls; Liaise with Monitoring Bodies NIHRC & ECNI and IMA as necessary; Updated information received on impact and implementation of Brexit.
1.7	Monitor Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on	Monitor experience of CYP to Government's response to Covid-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authoritative Report published based on Covid PoW commissioned work

	<p>Children and Young People's Rights.</p>	<p>on their Rights and advise Government and other relevant / monitoring Bodies as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report published. <p>NYP Covid subgroup to provide ongoing input and support to Covid PoW (x-ref with 1.3)</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring, advice, responding to queries in relation to impact of Covid on children's rights.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NICCY's Covid work is informed by children and young people • Clear and robust advice provided on an ongoing basis throughout the Covid pandemic response period – Education / Health & Social Care [incl Vulnerable CYP].
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NICCY BUSINESS PLAN 2021-22: Corporate Plan Objective 2

HLCO 2: To highlight and address critical issues which adversely affect children and young people.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.1.1	Advise Government on the development of an Anti-Poverty Strategy that will effectively reduce child poverty.	<p>Advise on the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy through membership of the Co-design group.</p> <p>Input to the Review of the social security mitigations package</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-poverty strategy reflects NICCY's advice and is child rights compliant. Key stakeholders including appropriate relevant authorities are made aware of actions required to address child poverty. Review incorporates NICCY advice on mitigations package.

Key Outcome: 2.2 Improving Mental Health & Wellbeing: We will gather evidence as to the adequacy of child and adolescent mental health services with a view to outlining critical actions for Government to better meet the needs of children and young people.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.2.1	Advise and Monitor implementation of recommendations from NICCY's Rights Based Review- Still Waiting.	Ongoing engagement with Duty Bearers and other Stakeholders to ensure decisive action is taken to address areas of concern identified in Monitoring Report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisive action taken to ensure 'Still Waiting' priority areas including data, funding, acute care provision and young people with additional needs are addressed as a matter of urgency.
		Publish third annual 'Still Waiting' Monitoring Report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDG and stakeholders are aware of NICCY's assessment of actions taken to deliver on Still Waiting recommendations.
		Support NYP Mental Health subgroup to provide ongoing advice to IDG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NYP subgroup identified and capacity building programme in place. Programme of meetings with IDG agreed.
		Ongoing promotion of Mental Health Toolkit with youth groups and schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toolkit raises the profile of mental health across Northern Ireland.
2.2.2	Provide advice to government on legislation, policy and practice relevant to Child and Adolescent Mental Health & Wellbeing.	NICCY provides child's rights compliance advice and monitors progress of law, policy, strategies and practice relating to children and young people's mental health (including MH Strategy and Substance Misuse Strategy).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely advice issued based on rights compliance and action taken, monitored and recorded. Implementation of advice monitored.

Key Outcome: 2.2 Improving Mental Health & Wellbeing: We will gather evidence as to the adequacy of child and adolescent mental health services with a view to outlining critical actions for Government to better meet the needs of children and young people.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
		<p>Ensure the promotion of child and adolescent mental health and wellbeing in children's participation in, and access to, education.</p> <p>Advise on and monitor the implementation of the DE/PHA 'Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework' in schools as and when required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress on school counselling recommendations. Timely advice issued and action taken, monitored and recorded.
		Continue to advise on actions required to ensure UNCRC compliance in relation to children and young people's mental capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mental Capacity Act is extended to include CYP, the provisions in the mental Health Order re safeguards and protections for children are commenced, and the Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice is revised to take account of re: D judgement.

Key Outcome: 2.3 Overcoming Educational Inequalities and Promoting Inclusion: We will work to ensure that the education received by all children is of a high standard and develops every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.3.1	Work towards transformational reform of the education system.	<p>Monitor and advise on child's rights elements of the Independent Review of Education Provision to be undertaken under the 'New Decade, New Approach' Deal and emergent recommendations.</p> <p>Engagement with NYP Education Sub-Group to advise independent Review</p> <p>Provide advice to Government on other education related issues as determined by NICCY</p> <p>Quarterly meetings with EA, ETI and DE.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advices issued / Action taken monitored and recorded. • Implementation of advice monitored and recorded. • NYP Sub-Group on Education produce recommendations and engage with relevant decision-makers. • High quality advice provided to relevant authorities in a timely manner and action monitored. • Progress made with/by relevant stakeholders and recorded.

Key Outcome: 2.3 Overcoming Educational Inequalities and Promoting Inclusion: We will work to ensure that the education received by all children is of a high standard and develops every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.3.2	Overseeing the monitoring and implementation of our Review of SEN provision, 'Too Little, Too Late'.	Action Plan in place / Hold relevant authorities to account in implementing recommendations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular engagement with relevant authorities to progress implementation of the Report recommendations including ongoing representation on the SEND Strategic Programme Board. Monitor implementation of SEND Action Plan in response to 'Too Little, Too Late'.
		Publish Too Little, Too Late Monitoring Report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant authorities and stakeholders are aware of NICCY's assessment of actions taken to deliver on Too Little, Too Late recommendations.
		Provide advice to Government on progression of SEND Framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing advice provided on revised regulations and draft SEN Code of Practice at the various stages of the legislative process. Action taken, recorded and monitored.

Key Outcome: 2.4 Addressing the Legacy of the Conflict: We will hold government to account in relation to the effective protection of children and young people from trauma, violence or mistreatment due to the continuing legacy impact of the conflict.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.4.1	Address coercive control, assaults and exploitation of children and young people by criminal gangs	Advise Duty Bearers on coercive control / exploitation including through engagement with Taskforce on Paramilitarism (TPCOC).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice provided. Action agreed, recorded and monitored.
2.4.2	Advise Government on respecting and promoting the rights of children to explore and celebrate their cultural identity and to recognise the rights of others to celebrate theirs.	<p>In Partnership with the Nerve Centre and Ulster Museum complete project on young people's perceptions of cultural commemorations.</p> <p>Develop programme of dissemination of the NYP's statement on celebrating culture and identity respectfully.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme of direct engagement with young people on rights to culture and identity agreed. Young people's voices are shared with key stakeholders

Key Outcome: 2.5 Challenging Discrimination: We will provide robust challenge where children and young people experience discrimination.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.5.1	Age discrimination legislation in accessing goods, facilities and services includes all children and young people.	<p>Advise further on the 'Age Discrimination (Access to Goods, Facilities and Services)' Bill when brought forward by the Executive under the 'New Decade, New Approach' Deal iro age considerations.</p> <p>Engagement with C&YP (if further required) re' dissemination of information or campaigning – to include older people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice issued, and response monitored and recorded. • Proposed legislation protects children and young people as well as all age groups. • Young people are informed on development of legislation iro age in access to Good, Facilities and Services. ('Age GFS').
2.5.2	Ensure equal protection from assault in the home for children and young people and improved support for parents and families.	<p>Plan in place / Provide authoritative advice on legal reform.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement with key stakeholders including older people.</p> <p>Engagement and advice to ensure improved government support for positive parenting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice issued and increased understanding of the evidence and rights basis of the case for legal reform. • Consider event on learning from legal reform in other jurisdictions. • Timely advice provided in relation to the draft Family & Parenting Support Strategy so that it addresses positive parenting and Equal Protection.

Key Outcome: 2.6 Strengthening Safeguarding provisions: Safeguarding arrangements for children and young people are strengthened as NICCY monitors and provides advice on provisions to protect children, including in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation and Separated Children Subject to Immigration Control.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.6.1	Sexual offences against children and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).	Continue to monitor implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry into CSE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NICCY reviews Government CSE Progress Reports when these are published and advice disseminated.
	Ensure effectiveness of arrangements to protect and support victims of sexual offences.	Monitor implementation of the Gillen Review into the law and procedures in cases of serious sexual offences, with particular reference to the Barnahus model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authoritative advice issued and children's rights inform implementation programme. Commissioned research on the application of the Barnahus model to Northern Ireland is completed and published; Advice provided to Government.
2.6.2	Children and Families subject to Immigration Control or new to Northern Ireland. Ensure effectiveness of arrangements to support Separated Children and families subject to immigration control.	<p>Continue to monitor arrangements to safeguard the rights and best interests of Separated Children and children in families subject to immigration control.</p> <p>Consider findings of commissioned report on children in families with No Recourse to Public Funds, and incorporate into advice to government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor government action taken in response to advice. <p>X Ref with developments regarding the impact of Brexit.</p> <p>Research is completed and informs NICCY's advice to government.</p>

Key Outcome: 2.6 Strengthening Safeguarding provisions: Safeguarding arrangements for children and young people are strengthened as NICCY monitors and provides advice on provisions to protect children, including in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation and Separated Children Subject to Immigration Control.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.6.3	Safeguarding and social care overall Provide advice on matters as determined by NICCY.	Advice provided on a range of relevant safeguarding matters, such as Child Death Reviews and Adoption and Children Bill, as deemed appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advices issued and action taken monitored.
2.6.4	Review of restraint and seclusion in educational settings	Produce a report outlining the use of restraint and seclusion in schools and development of child rights compliant recommendations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation on the DE R&S working group • Stakeholder engagement on use of procedure • Data gathering and analysis completed, and report drafted. • Report published and disseminated. • Monitor implementation of calls to relevant authorities.

Key Outcome: 2.7 Addressing Issues In Youth Justice: NICCY's advice promotes greater adherence to and consideration of, the Rights of Children and Young People in the youth justice system.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.7.1	Children and Young People involved with the youth justice system have their rights respected and protected.	<p>Monitor, advise and challenge government and relevant agencies regarding the rights of children involved in the criminal justice system as appropriate including MACR, S&S, CHIS.</p> <p>Engagement and participation in relevant fora including PSNI Youth Champion forum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice produced and disseminated to stakeholders as / when necessary. • Monitor youth justice developments including against SOCRNI Calls. • Meetings held, action taken, recorded and monitored. • Increased support from political parties to raise MACR.

Key Outcome: 2.8 Addressing Homelessness: NICCY identifies the extent, and root causes of housing insecurity, to inform advice to Government.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.8.1	Conduct a Scoping Study on the Rights of Children and Young People who are homeless or facing housing insecurity.	Commission a small scoping study of the issues facing families and children in housing crisis or insecurity to inform NICCY's work on these issues.	Scoping paper commissioned and completed.

Key Outcome: 2.9 Addressing health waiting lists: NICCY's scrutiny of Health waiting lists leads to children facing shorter delays accessing appointments and treatment

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.9.1	Address Waiting Lists for Children and Young People requiring health consultations, tests and treatments face shorter delays, resulting in better outcomes.	Continue review of paediatric waiting times to include: (1) analysis of waiting time data from each Health and Social Care Trust, (2) gathering views and experiences of professionals / practitioners working in paediatric services; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waiting time data gathered and analysed; Views of professionals and children, young people and their families captured;

Key Outcome: 2.9 Addressing health waiting lists: NICCY's scrutiny of Health waiting lists leads to children facing shorter delays accessing appointments and treatment

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
		<p>(3) gathering views of children and young people and their families who have experience of being on a waiting list for a paediatric service;</p> <p>(4) Draft and publish Report;</p> <p>(5) Monitoring implementation of recommendations to Govt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report drafted and published; • Monitoring action taken to address report recommendations.

Key Outcome: 2.10 Children's rights and the environment: Supporting a youth led initiative to explore the child rights implications of environmental matters, engaging a wide range of children and young people and to promote their calls

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
2.10.1	Support YP to advise government on Children's Rights and the Environment.	<p>Work with SCCYP to develop project to provide an interactive platform for CYP to engage COP26 delegates. This work will be led by the NYP and SCCYP Youth Advisers.</p> <p>Work with NYP to develop a forward-facing programme of YP engagement in Year 3 of our Corporate Plan to explore child rights perspectives on environmental matters, and to support direct engagement with relevant authorities.</p> <p>Ongoing advice produced in relation to environmental policies.</p>	<p>Engagement materials produced and distributed internationally. Interactive platform developed, and used to stream inputs from CYP to COP-26.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan iro Programme of engagement produced. Advice produced and disseminated to stakeholders as / when necessary.

NICCY BUSINESS PLAN 2021-'22: Corporate Plan Objective 3

HLCO 3: To address breaches of children's and young people's rights.			
Key Outcome 3: Potential breaches of children and young people's rights are fully investigated and addressed.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
3.1	Complete Formal Investigation and Produce Report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain any further necessary documentation / information and/or hear evidence from such persons as considered appropriate. Read/Summarise/Analyse documentation received from Relevant Authorities. Draft adverse findings and share with Relevant Authorities ahead of evidence sessions as req'd. Conduct evidence sessions with Relevant Authorities. Periodic PoW mtgs and Q'ly Update meetings with Commissioner. Drafting of report on an ongoing basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification / review / action as necessary. Summaries completed. Thematic issues identified. Adverse findings completed and sent to Relevant Authorities Evidence sessions will be arranged (Covid considerations will influence media used) Schedule of meetings / actions and outputs recorded. Drafting and publishing to be completed with copies sent to relevant stakeholders.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register of Recommendations produced. • Monitoring of Relevant Authorities' implementation of recommendations • Complete Accredited Investigator Training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register in place as required under legislation. • Monitoring successfully carried out as per legislative remit • Completion of course/coursework and accreditation awarded.
3.2	Conduct Independent Investigations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify any cases which are appropriate for strategic investigation and progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If identified, draft ToR for Investigation and issue in line with process and action/s taken monitored and recorded.
3.3	Assist children and young people with complaints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All complaints triaged at case allocation & review (CAR) meetings and allocated appropriately in line with legislation. • Complaints which are not within remit to be investigated, will be signposted to appropriate agencies. • Annual Complaints & Legal (ACL) Report 2020-'21 completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust records maintained on AP System. • 90% successful resolution of cases. • Quarterly Trend Reports produced to identify trends and inform work planning. • Cases outside remit signposted appropriately. • Annual Complaints Casework Report 2020-'21 (retrospective) produced.
3.4	Bring, Intervene in, or assist with, legal proceedings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proceedings issued as/when appropriate in line with NICCY's legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal interventions/cases progressed and the rights of children and young people are realised

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide financial assistance to applicants iro cases in line with NICCY LFC criteria and processes. As per legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CYP's Rights protections supported and outcomes monitored.
3.5	Address and investigate Protected Disclosures in line with legislative requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected disclosures processed as per 'Public Interest Disclosure Act (as amended) and NICCY's Policy and Procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigation into relevant authority/ies action. • Outcomes of investigations recorded. • Annual update issued in line with legislative and governance requirements.
3.6	NICCY's work is supported by robust legal advice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal advice (internal) provided to inform ongoing work of NICCY. • Legal opinions (external) sought as/when specialist knowledge outside internal expertise is necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NICCY's worked underpinned and compliant with legislation and other legal requirements. • Legal advice provided to inform our work as/when required and disseminated as/when deemed necessary.
3.7	NICCY's legal work, UNCRC and NICCY's role is promoted among relevant audiences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPD event/s held on areas of current interest/developments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of NICCY's duties / powers is increased and impact/influence in legal sphere in safeguarding Children's Rights is enhanced.

NICCY BUSINESS PLAN 2021-'22: Corporate Plan Objective 4

HLCO 4: To raise awareness of children's and young people's rights, the UNCRC and the functions of the Commissioner.			
Key Outcome: 4 Greater understanding and awareness of children's and young people's rights, the UNCRC and NICCY's functions and work in achieving its mission.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
4.1	Enhance, Promote and monitor awareness of NICCY's work and profile among relevant 'audiences' i.e. media outlets / public / political / CYP.	<p>Develop an Annual Communications Strategy.</p> <p>Provide communication support across a range of priorities such as the Formal Investigation, Waiting Lists, Mental Health and Education workstreams.</p> <p>Produce NICCY publications and promotional materials.</p> <p>Proactive and reactive media engagement.</p> <p>Monitor media engagement i.e. print, broadcast and online.</p> <p>Monitor political developments of relevance to NICCY including relevant items of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy developed and implemented. • Media and Online Analysis completed, and Communications Strategy reviewed accordingly. • Plans developed and implemented so that NICCY's work informs the public, political and other debates. • Relevant publications and materials produced and disseminated – including Investigation and Annual Report. • Monitor media, public engagement and feedback. • Media enquiries responded to appropriately in line with NICCY's legislative remit. • Media coverage of NICCY's positions and work meets objectives set out in Strategy and is accurate. • NICCY is informed of political developments and relevant staff have most up to date information to inform ongoing work in specific areas set out in the Business Plan

		<p>Assembly Business and AQs.</p> <p>Undertake the redevelopment of the NICCY website and ongoing maintenance of the new site.</p> <p>Undertake online and social media activity to promote NICCY's work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver presentations, providing training and awareness raising on children's rights • Engage with key stakeholders and general public to raise their awareness of CYP's rights and NICCY, and to provide advice on implementing children's rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website is current and up-to-date, and enquiries responded to as received. • Social Media sites updated with relevant content. Social Media enquiries responded to appropriately. • Review and deliver workshops as appropriate to raise awareness of the UNCRC, C&YP's Rights and NICCY's work to key stakeholders. • Increased awareness amongst key stakeholders of children's rights and NICCY.
4.2	Enhance awareness of the UNCRC, C&YP's Rights and NICCY's work/role with Children and Young People.	<p>If feasible and appropriate, engage with children and young people across Northern Ireland to raise their awareness of their rights and NICCY, and to hear from them about the issues affecting them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with Children and Young People including vulnerable children and young people and at, if feasible, at public events.

		<p>If feasible and appropriate, produce materials and supporting guidance for use by teachers and others to raise children and young people's awareness of their rights and of NICCY.</p> <p>Publishing a range of awareness-raising materials for children and young people, and producing young people's versions of each significant piece of work we complete.</p> <p>Explore feasibility of developing online Child Right Training resources for statutory agencies, e.g. LinkS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and delivery of workshops to raise awareness of the UNCRC, C&YP's Rights and NICCY's work to key stakeholders. • Identify 3 key work areas to develop resource materials to support ongoing work e.g., SoCRNI, Age GFS, BoR, CRIA. • Young people are better informed about NICCY and their rights. • Position paper developed on the viability of developing online Child Rights Training resources
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NICCY BUSINESS PLAN 2021-'22: Corporate Plan Objective 5

HLCO 5: To promote the participation of Children and Young People in decision making.

Key Outcome: 5 Increased involvement of, and effective mechanisms for, the participation of Children and Young People in decision making affecting their lives.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
5.1	Develop and support NICCY's Youth Panel to ensure that their voice is integral to the work of NICCY.	<p>Involve NICCY Youth Panel via sub groups in the implementation of Business Plan particularly in regard to key priorities.</p> <p>NYP subs groups to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Inequalities • Environmental (see 2.10.1) • Covid 19 <p>Continued involvement in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENYA programme • Residential teambuilding • NICCY Annual event - Nov • Human Rights Festival-Dec <p>Reactive engagement: It is anticipated that there will Covid related issues affecting all aspects of young people's lives.</p> <p>Engagement with the NYP may be on a reactive basis and additional to scheduled BP activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold induction, support and training sessions for new NYP members to build capacity, integrate and facilitate NYP planning. • NYP advice on NICCY priority areas of work including communication with children and young people. • NYP inform NICCY's work about issues facing children and young people. • NYP, with NICCY, explore creative and innovative ways to campaign for change for children and young people across Northern Ireland. • NYP 'voice' / input to events. • Capacity building with NYP. • Feedback received on NYP input. • NYP provides contemporary, where possible, responses to ongoing and developing issues facing children and young people

		Hold a NICCY Youth Panel Leavers' celebration event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebration event held and positive evaluation obtained.
5.2	Advising the NI Assembly, NI Executive, Departments and their agencies in the development of meaningful participation structures, policies and practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with appropriate public authorities to support and advise on bespoke youth engagement to support legislative, strategy and policy obligations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissemination of Participation Guidance. Publication of proactive and reactive advice to Statutory Agencies as required/necessary and record of response to this.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with key Participation Practitioners through holding two Participation Forum meetings to promote best practice and share experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation practitioners across all sectors have a better understanding of good practice in participation and provide evidence of positive engagement with children and young people.

NICCY BUSINESS PLAN 2021-'22: Corporate Plan Objective 6

HLCO 6: To ensure NICCY is an effective and efficient organisation.

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
6.1	Deliver on our Annual Business Plan 2021 - 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise organisational resources (financial, human and physical) effectively. Development of Departmental and Staff Work Plans incorporating Programmes of Work and Core Business as per JDs. Engagement with NI Govt Depts; Relevant authorities; and NGOs through, NICCY Advisory Forum, Dept'al Children's Champions Forum, Participation Forum and relevant fora including via repres'tion on relevant external fora/wkg grps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriate allocation & monitoring of organisational Staff resource, Grant-in-aid via Sponsor Dept DfC. Expenditure within permitted variance. Periodic reporting on achievement of set targets. Achievement of agreed annual objectives as per Areas/Programmes of Work; PoWs / Project Initiation Documents (PIDs); Action Plans; Staff Annual Objectives monitoring. Stakeholder engagement as necessary in achievement of Business Plan aims and objectives.

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
6.2	Response to COVID Pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to ensure that Government and TEO advice followed in relation to Pandemic. Return to the Workplace Plans updated in line with guidance and staff consulted with. Meetings of ChExecs / Premises Committee held and feedback provided. Continued consideration of staff welfare during pathway out of pandemic. Consideration and inclusion of future agile working approaches beneficial to NICCY and Staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working from home and clear and phased return to the workplace plans implemented in line with relevant guidance and advice. Staff buy in with return-to-work plans. All necessary arrangements in place in Equality House to ensure safe working practices. Reduction in staff absence and continued consultation in relation to plans
6.3	IT Systems Upgrade (MS 365)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with IT Staff to ensure all NICCY laptops updated with MS365 software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All laptops / devices have necessary software to enable MS 365 accessibility.

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication with staff at each stage and any issues/ queries dealt with. Telephony system stage of project completed with IT staff guidance Full Training programme to be delivered. Records Management project including confirming retention policies / access permissions and file naming conventions undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy in and understanding of all staff at each stage of project. All phone calls calls to be answered with use of laptops and headsets via MS 365 accessibility. Full understanding and usage of new software in place in all areas of work. Delivery of records management project.
6.4	Accurately Monitor and Report on NICCY's Performance and Impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule in place / Produce Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21 including 'Performance Impact Table'. Quarterly Reports to our Sponsor Dept DfC; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule and production of Annual Report & Annual Accounts in line with latest FReM Guidance. Annual Report laid in NI Assembly and disseminated to stakeholders.

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal reporting 'Performance Monitoring Evaluation Framework' (PMEF)/ IG / Senior Management Team (SMT) / Leadership & Management Team (LMT)/ Staff Meetings/ Departmental workplans; Annual Appraisals and Reviews. Ongoing Financial monitoring Communications monitoring (ref 4.2). Periodic reports / updates to stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly ALB Corporate Performance Reports (x4) submitted to Sponsor Dept. Quarterly and End of Year PMEFS completed for IG / SMT / LMT meetings; Monthly reviews of Departmental Work Plans; Annual Review Appraisals & Objectives Set; Periodic 1-1 Reviews. Annual Budget Allocations [Corp' & Depart'sl] Monthly management accounts produced Completion of periodic finance returns for DfC CE monthly finance reviews / internal monitoring. Communications and Media monitoring – Daily, PR, Statements, Social Media activity; Mthly Mtgs. Feedback to Stakeholders at Meetings: Advisory Forum; Participation Forum; Children' Champions Forum; Events, Meetings and Seminars.
6.5	Ensure efficient systems of Corporate Governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adherence to MSFM and input into the new Partnership / Governance Agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice and input to DfC / DoF process & template.

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate governance reporting and accountability mechanisms. • Implementation of systems of internal controls and financial management in line with Managing Public Money NI (MPMNI). • Quarterly Audit and Risk Assurance (ARAC) meetings, • Effective risk management [Corporate and Departmental Risk Registers]. • Internal Audits carried out and relevant action taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Papers & returns to DfC, Comm'r, ChExec'. • Robust SIC in place ensuring effective governance mechanisms / adherence. • Qly meetings / assurance mechanisms in place / relevant papers presented / follow up actions completed and recorded. • Risk Management Strategy in place and quarterly reviews & updates to Corporate Risk Register (CRR) alongside monthly reviews/updates to Dept'al Risk Reg's (DRRs). • Regular update on Organisational ext'/int' risks. • Annual Audit Plan 2021/22. Planning meetings held, plans agreed, fieldwork completion, management responses input and appropriate action taken in regard to Internal Auditor's Reports. • Reporting of audit outcomes, recommendations and management responses to ARAC. • Planning meeting held; Strategy agreed; fieldwork completion; management responses provided; relevant action taken.

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Audits carried out by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) and relevant action taken. Progress on recommendations from Review of Legislation [Article 24 Report]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Auditor's Report (RTTCWG) / outcomes incorporated into Annual Report as necessary. Actions taken following meetings as scheduled with Sponsor Dept Minister for Communities, relevant Officials and First and Deputy First Ministers (TEO).
6.6	Effective Performance Management across all areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates to NICCY's Performance Management Policy & Procedure implemented during 2021/22. Regular reviews carried out for all staff and appropriately recorded. Use of competence framework in PM processes progressed. Annual Training Plan developed and actioned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance Management Policy and Procedure in line with NICS best practice and applied consistently across the organisation. Personal / Departmental Objectives and Business plan targets consistently met. Competence framework used in setting of objectives and in subsequent reviews and appraisal. Training & Development costed Plan in place and opportunities undertaken by all staff recorded for LMT. Delivery of relevant range of mandatory training for all staff throughout the year.

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge, skills and competencies.
6.7	Prompt Implementation and / or updating of relevant policies, procedures and practice as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of relevant information sources i.e. DoF, DfC, legislative req's. Processes in place followed to ensure all updates are incorporated into relevant policies, procedures, guidance etc. Clear communication to all staff on any changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NICCY advice and guidance up to date. All policies, procedures and practices are in line with latest developments. Policies and procedures reviews and updates as per internal processes following review schedule and relevant direction e.g. via legislative changes, Department of Finance (DoF), Dear Accounting Officer (DAO) / Financial Director (DFD) updates. All staff are aware of changes in areas of work and all relevant changes are noted and clearly actioned.
6.8	Organisational Accreditation levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Investors in People organisational accreditation 'journey'. Organisational culture work developed. Organisational values and behaviours demonstrated. Staff Charter adhered to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accreditation award maintained. Progress towards next level of accreditation. Ongoing improvements identified and actioned through internal processes / records kept. Values and behaviours further communicated including in external communications and adhered to internally throughout NICCY. Staff Charter expectations guide all.

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
6.9	Review NICCY's Corporate Social Responsibility Activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to review shared services in place and identify opportunities for further savings if possible. Identify further opportunities for environmentally friendly activities. Review opportunities for savings ensuring 'value for (public) money' / sharing of expertise. Programme of Wellbeing activities for Staff to be carried out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action as identified; opportunities re' shared services maximised within business needs context and further suggestions considered. Equality House Premises & HR Committees' outputs actioned as/where appropriate. Use of staff suggestion process re' ideas. Environmentally friendly activities identified and promoted. Participation in relevant cost saving projects individually or as part of larger public sector network. Relevant seminars / training / presentations / events / team days held to positively impact on staff wellbeing (e.g. information provided on sources of support such as Occupational Health / Employee Welfare & Assistance Programmes, Health events).
6.10	Work with other organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to work with other organisations whose work complements that of NICCY. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership working with other relevant organisations (including via MOUs / Protocols); TOR clearly defined for each piece of work taken forward.

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.			
Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication to stakeholders of joint working positively identifying benefits and outputs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of NICCY and work with other organisations.
6.11	Develop Annual Business Plan 2022-'23 [Year 2 of 2022-'23 Revised triennial Corporate Plan]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Schedule for drafting of Business Plan 2022-'23. Draft Business Plan '22-'23 Submit to Sponsor Dept DfC by due deadline. Business Plan to be published on website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule in place and disseminated for implementation. Business Plan drafted including annual Budget requirements. Business Plan submission to DfC. Business plan published on website.
6.12	Progress work on proposed future Premises move (2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete response to DoF / RPM on 'Belfast 2' project informed by staff and potential 'agile' blended working approach. Liaise with Team responsible for taking this forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response compiled in consultation with staff to reflect key requirements for NICCY. <p>NICCY staff form part of project group, feed into decisions and help inform outcomes.</p>

Key Outcome: 6 NICCY has used its resources effectively and efficiently in achieving its mission to safeguard and promote the rights of Children and Young People.

Ref. No.	Key Actions	Activities to be undertaken	Key Performance Indicators
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep Staff informed of developments. 	All staff consulted with, informed of developments and buy into future premises move.