



northern ireland commissioner
for children and young people

NICCY Business Plan 2009 - 2010

3 April 2009

Introduction

This Business Plan 2009 – 2010 has been produced to facilitate discussion between the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdfM) and the Northern Ireland Commission for Children and Young People around business priorities and resources for the financial year 2009 – 2010. The plan acknowledges that there are areas of work which are being progressed from the previous Business Plan 2008-2009. These also link directly to NICCY's Corporate Plan 2008-2011.

Resource Assumptions

This Business Plan has been prepared on the basis of the assumptions that it will be delivered within NICCY's approved staffing levels and resources as provided via grant-in-aid from OFMdfM.

Corporate Objectives 2008-2011

The Business Plan 2009-2010 is based on the following corporate objectives, which derive from the core statutory functions of NICCY.

1. Listen to and encourage the active involvement and engagement of C&YP and their parents and promote our work.
2. Provide a responsive, accessible and targeted legal assistance, complaints and advice service to children and young people and their parents.
3. Influence and improve the law, policy and practice relating to children and young people.
4. Utilise the powers and functions of the NICCY Order to promote and safeguard the rights and best interests of children and young people.
5. Develop, implement and evaluate strategies for research, service reviews and investigations.
6. Develop, implement and evaluate effective internal policies and procedures and governance arrangements.
7. Maintain and evaluate criteria for reviews, investigations and legal assistance.
8. Develop, implement and evaluate strategies for communication and children and young people's participation.

9. To have staff numbers and skill levels required to effectively deliver our services.
10. Value staff and support them to achieve an appropriate work life balance.
11. Develop our staff and leadership in line with best practice
 - Identify
 - Plan
 - Take action
 - Evaluate &
 - Review
12. Develop a child friendly and child centred culture.
13. Develop, allocate and manage annual budgets to fulfil our priorities.
14. Control costs, make effective and efficient use of our resources within budget.
15. Secure funding to maintain & develop our services.
16. Develop and maintain effective governance arrangements in line with best practice.

NICCY recognises the strategic importance of the involvement of children and young people in all aspects of NICCY business. Children and Young people's involvement is embedded in each of the corporate objectives.

Priority 1 Play and Leisure

	Business Objectives	Actions	Targets/ timescales	Outputs/outcomes	Resp	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1.1	Influence policy & provision relating to play and leisure for all cyp across NI	<p>scope play provision across Northern Ireland by council area to influence councils to improve provision where required</p> <p>Involve c&yp in young person led campaign on play & leisure</p> <p>Advocacy and wider communication strategies developed and implemented to ensure findings and recommendations implemented</p>	<p>Q2</p> <p>Q2-3</p> <p>Q3-4</p>	<p>Play review report produced and published (PDF)</p> <p>Young person led campaign including information and campaign materials produced and completed</p> <p>Play provision enhanced</p>	<p>H of P&R</p> <p>H of P&R / C&P</p> <p>H of P&R</p>				

Priority 2 Having Your Say									
	Business Objectives	Actions	Targets/ timescales	Outputs/outcomes	Responsibility	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2.1	Explore ways to facilitate the participation of marginalised children and young people	Develop an action learning project working with marginalised children and young people and develop guidance	Q1-4	<p>NICCY are better informed of the challenges of participating with marginalised young people</p> <p>Marginalised young people have their voices heard</p> <p>Guidance/learning produced to influence others</p>	H of C&P				
2.2	Promote participation of children and young people in Government and decision making bodies	<p>Produce policy paper on Article 12</p> <p>Implement key recs. of Staff participation audit of C&YP participation in NICCY</p> <p>Develop internal NICCY children and young people Governance policy and action plan</p> <p>Develop Participation</p>	<p>Q1</p> <p>Q1-4</p> <p>Q1-4</p> <p>Q1-4</p>	<p>Policy paper produced and used to inform communication and advocacy.</p> <p>Improve C&YP participation in NICCY's work.</p> <p>Internal policy paper produced and incorporated into working practices.</p> <p>Produce Statement of Intent</p>	<p>H of P&R</p> <p>H of C&P/CE</p> <p>H of C&P/CE</p> <p>H of C&P/P&R</p>				

		Policy Statement of Intent		Engage with Statutory Authorities to promote Statement of Intent					
		Further develop Democra School programme	Q1-4	Government encouraged to bring forward school council legislation	H of C&P/P&R				
		Explore options to promote C&YP's involvement in community planning.	Q3-4	In preparation for RPA, influence a children and young people focused participative approach among statutory bodies	H of P&R/C&P				
		Hold Government to account on how it engages C&YP when developing policies and delivering services that affect them	Q1-4	Monitor the degree to which government are consulting with C&YP on issues affecting them (baseline for indicators work) as stated in the Govs. 10 year strategy	H of P&R				
		Explore (for possible outworking in year 3) the option of organising Commissioner's Participation Awards	Q1-4	Feasibility study carried out to determine requirements to deliver Participation Awards	H of C&P/ Commissioner				
2.3	Promote and lead	Hold two roundtables	Q1&3	Commissioner is informed on state	H of C&P and				

	learning and development of Participation practice	with key stakeholders to promote children and young people's participation, identify gaps and inform practice.		of participation with children and young people Key stakeholders including Children's Champions informed	Commissioner				
2.4	Promote UNCRC Awareness	<p>Extend and explore opportunities to train others to promote the UNCRC using the Train the Trainers model</p> <p>Further develop UNCRC workshop resources on www.niccy.org</p> <p>Work with Young @ Art to deliver UNCRC workshops as part of the Champion of the Child Exhibition</p>	<p>Q1-4</p> <p>Q3</p> <p>Q1-3</p>	<p>Adult stakeholders and young people have knowledge of UNCRC including concluding observations and access to resources</p> <p>YP have knowledge of UNCRC including the 2008 Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and also reference the 20th Anniversary year of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child</p>	<p>H of C&P</p> <p>H of C&P</p>				

2.5	Ensure C&YP are at the centre of NICCYS work and play a key role in advising the Commissioner	Further develop the role and functions of the Niccy Youth advisory Panel(NYP) by developing a 2009/10 NYP Action Plan	Q1-4	NICCY Youth Panel continue to advise, influence and participate in the work of the Commissioner and NICCY	H of C&P				
		NYP to develop their own budgeted young person initiative	Q1-3	Children and Young People's participation and capacity built	H of C&P				
		Research training sessions held with NYP	Q2	Youth panel have skills to advise on, participate in and conduct research	H of R&P				
2.6	Recognise Young peoples skills and capacity and accredit their achievements	Explore development of non-examination accreditation for young people	Q1-4	NICCY highlights the need for Young people to be rewarded with qualification for personal development and capacity building	Commissioner H of C&P/ H of P&R				

Priority 3 Wellbeing and Mental Health

	Business Objectives	Actions	Targets/ timescales	Outputs/outcomes	Responsibility	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3.1	Influence the development of legislation and action plans on mental health to ensure that they take into account the needs of C&YP	Respond to consultations on mental health & related issues to enable NICCY to proactively influence policy & legislation Engage Youth Panel in advocacy/campaigning	Q1 - 4	NICCY has positively influenced legislation and action plans on mental health to ensure they take into account the needs of C&YP	H of P&R H of L&C H of C&P				
3.2	Develop an evidence base and set of recommendations on promoting children's emotional health	Produce situational analysis regarding children's perspectives on promoting emotional health. Deliver participatory research project on children's understandings of and requirements for good emotional health.	Q1 Q2-4	Situational analysis completed Participatory research project, with clear recommendations completed.	H of P&R H of P&R				

Priority 4 Protection

	Business Objectives	Actions	Targets/ timescales	Outputs/outcomes	Responsibility	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
4.1	Advocate for the protection of children against physical punishment	Positively influence public opinion on physical punishment	Q2	Policy paper on physical punishment produced and used to influence opinion as part of a wider communications strategy.	H of P&R				
		Keep under review opportunities for legal intervention.	Q1-4	Use of legal powers/function considered	H of L&C				
		Develop opportunities to inform and raise awareness around Positive Parenting as alternatives to physical punishment with partners;	Q1-4	Contribution to Campaign on Positive Parenting.	H of L&C/ H of C&P				
		Explore Conference/Seminar with partners	Q1-2		H of L&C				
		Review possibilities of adding value to current initiatives							

4.2	Build evidence on key issues relating to community safety for C&YP	Scope existing evidence on community safety and C&YP	Q4	Situational analysis completed and used to inform further plans on community safety	H of P&R				
4.3	Obtain protection for C&YP against the use of Taser	Intervene in Judicial Review in High Court NI Assess Judgment and consider further action	Q1-2	Judgment which highlights right to protection for C&YP and incorporates UNCRC and Concluding Observations	H of L&C				

Priority 5 Equal Treatment

	Business Objectives	Actions	Targets/ timescales	Outputs/outcomes	Responsibility	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
5.1	Influence government to improve educational outcomes for Traveller children	Develop an advocacy plan and wider communications plan based on NICCY's research report Participation on DE Traveller Education forum	Q1-4	Policy and practice regarding education for Traveller children is delivered more effectively	H of P&R H of L&C				
5.2	Influence government to improve advocacy for disabled children	Develop an advocacy plan and wider communications plan based on NICCY's research report	Q1-4	Policy and practice regarding advocacy for disabled children is delivered more effectively	H of P&R				
5.3	Influence government to improve Speech and Language Therapy	Develop an advocacy plan and wider communications plan based on NICCY's research report Continue to use Legal Opinion on breach of CYP's rights regarding Speech and Language Therapy provision	Q1-4 Q1-4	Improved service delivery to children and young people requiring speech and language therapy	H of P&R H of L&C				

5.4	Gather evidence on inequalities in entitlements for young people	Research paper on YP's entitlements	Q1	<p>Paper completed and disseminated (PDF)</p> <p>YP factsheets produced drawing from research paper and individual casework.</p>	<p>H of P&R</p> <p>H of P&R / H of L&C</p>				
5.5	Gather evidence on inequalities for migrant children	Produce a situational analysis for migrant children	Q3/Q4	<p>Paper completed.</p> <p>Further plans for work on migrant children developed.</p>	H of P&R				
5.6	Gather evidence on inequalities for LGBT C&YP	Produce a situational analysis for LGBT C&YP	Q3/Q4	<p>Paper completed.</p> <p>Further plans for work on LGBT children developed.</p>	H of P&R				

Core Work/Corporate									
	Business Objectives	Actions	Targets/ timescales	Outputs/outcomes	Responsibility	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C1	Work in partnership with stakeholders to inform NICCY's business planning and ensure that we maintain strategic focus	Review and improve our governance processes Review business Plan on a quarterly basis	Q1 Q1- Q4	Governance Framework reviewed and improved Business plan reviewed and priorities identified	CE CE SMT				
C2	Ensure regularity and propriety in the stewardship of public funds	Regular monitoring of income, expenditure and variances and action taken as appropriate Meet efficiency saving target as laid down by OFMdFM NICCY accounts produced in accordance with statutory deadlines Implement recommendations in relation to findings contained within NIAO Report to those charged	Q1-Q4 Q1-Q4 Q3 Q4	Monthly management accounts reviewed at SMT Quarterly financial performance update provided to Audit Committee Efficiency savings targets met NICCY accounts produced and within 2% of break-even position Fully implemented	CE SMT CE SMT CE SMT				

		with Governance and internal audit reports							
C3	Ensure that risks are managed effectively at all levels throughout NICCY	Develop Corporate Risk Register	Q1	Corporate Risk Register developed	CE				
		Review and update Corporate Risk Register	Q1-Q4	Corporate Risk Register reviewed and updated to reflect current risks and protect NICCY's reputation	CE SMT				
		Monitor adverse incidents throughout NICCY	Q1-Q4	Quarterly report provided to SMT and annual update provided to Audit Committee	CE				
		Develop NICCY's Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plan	Q2	Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plan produced	CE				
		Risk management is embedded at all levels within NICCY	Q1-Q4	Corporate Risk Register reviewed quarterly Risks at Department level reviewed every month and update provided at SMT	SMT				
C4	Deliver, support and maintain information and communication technologies to support the changing needs of NICCY	Develop and implement a Disaster Recovery Plan for ICT	Q1	Plan approved and appropriate technologies functioning to support and enhance business continuity	CE				
		Review ICT service level agreement	Q1	Review and update SLA with Equality Commission Northern Ireland	CE				
		Meet audit requirements in relation to best	Q1	Compliance achieved against internal audit recommendations	CE				

		practice in ICT							
C5	Ensure compliance and accountability in how NICCY manages its records in line with best practice	Develop a training programme in relation to records management	Q2	Plan confirmed and training delivered	CE				
		Review and revise, as appropriate, NICCY manual and electronic file plans	Q3	Revised file plan developed and implemented throughout NICCY	CE SMT				
		Review SLA for off-site storage of records	Q3-Q4	SLA is fit for purpose and meets NICCY requirements	CE				
		Meet audit requirements in relation to best practice in records management	Q4	Preparation made in advance of audit and satisfactory compliance achieved	CE SMT				
C6	Promote equality, diversity and good relations throughout NICCY	Ensure implementation of NICCY's disability Action Plan	Q1-Q4	Actions specified in Disability Action Plan are implemented according to timescales	SMT				
		Continue to promote equality of opportunity and good relations	Q4	Staff survey conducted to assess awareness and effectiveness of NICCY equality activities	CE				
		Mainstream equality screening into all aspects of NICCY activity	Q3	Screening policy developed screening documentation available for all NICCY policies and strategies	CE				
		Ensure all staff attend appropriate equality /diversity awareness	Q1-Q4	Training records demonstrate that each member of staff has been trained in the relevant	SMT				

		training		aspect of equality/diversity training					
C7	Enhance learning and development within NICCY to deliver business objectives	Investor in People assessment takes place	Q4	NICCY is accredited with the Investor in People standard	CE				
		Employer of Choice re-assessment takes place	Q1-Q4	NICCY maintains its accreditation as an Employer of Choice	CE				
		Develop personal development plans for all staff which link to business objectives	Q1	Each member of staff has an individual personal development plan which links to NICCY's Business Plan 09/10	SMT				
		Improve support, supervisory and appraisal systems	Q1-Q4	1:1s take place on a regular basis each 6-8 weeks Each member of staff receives an annual appraisal no later than 31 May 2009	SMT				
		Demonstrate value added by these processes	Q4	Staff survey conducted. The results of the survey will be shared with staff and	CE SMT				
		Deliver ongoing staff participation training	Q1-4	Staff develop greater awareness of and skills in participation and develop greater confidence to work with C&YP	H of C&P				
C8	Ensure maximum return on all resources	Review organisational resource deployment in line with the HR and financial strategies	Q2-Q3	Resources reviewed in terms of accommodation and staffing	CE SMT				

C9	Ensure NICCY complies with high ethical standards	Review and improve HR and financial strategies, policies and procedures	Q2	Strategies, policies and procedures reviewed and improved	CE SMT				
		Review and improve administration and support functions to ensure economy efficiency and effectiveness	Q2-Q3	Resources reviewed to ensure value for money is maintained	CE SMT				
		Review compliance with ethical standards across all areas of NICCY's work.	Q1-4		CE/HODs				
		Maintain Research Ethics Committees	Q1-4	All research conducted complies with Research Ethics Committee advice	H of P&R				
C10	Evaluate impact and effectiveness of work	Review and improve systems for monitoring and reporting on impact of work	Q1-4	M&E system fit for purpose.	All HODs				

C11	Ensure that information gathered by NICCY appropriately informs work of the office	Develop and maintain a system for analysing information gathered through a range of sources	Q1-4	System developed and maintained.	All HODs				
		Develop and maintain 'Listening to You' programme in work with schools, youth organisations etc.	Q1-4	Commissioner's work is informed of current issues affecting Children and Young People	H of C&P				
C12	Ensure NICCY's peer research projects are of a high standard.	Develop protocol for NICCY's peer research projects	Q3	Protocol completed and circulated to relevant stakeholders (PDF)	H of P&R				
		Host information sharing workshops with other agencies conducting peer research.	Q2, Q4	Two workshops held	H of P&R				
C13	Review Priority Project Teams and action plans	Agree and implement Action Plan including roles, responsibilities, milestones, budget and any potential partners	Q2	Priority Project teams in place based on required skill set and NICCY Youth Panel	HODs				
C14	Influence government to act on Concluding Observations	Produce and implement an organisational action plan based on	Q1-4	Plan produced and implemented	HODs				

		Concluding Observations							
C15	Develop a set of child rights indicators to enable NICCY to monitor government deliver on its obligations to children, and to plan NICCY's work.	Roundtable Establish and run a Steering Group Develop a methodology for indicators project Pilot participatory research with children Workshops with professionals conducted	Q1 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4	Roundtable held – paper produced Steering Group established and three meetings held Methodology developed Research completed. Workshops completed. A draft set of indicators developed for one UNCRC cluster	H of P&R H of P&R H of P&R H of P&R				
C16	Influence government to conduct child rights impact assessments	Revise CRIA guidance and disseminate (PDF)	Q3	Guidance document completed and disseminated	H of P&R				
C17	Maximise delivery for children through Bill of Rights	Assessment of BOR against UNCRC Work with partners to achieve realisation of BOR in NI and GB	Q1 Q1-4	Completed and used to influence BOR Progress made towards realising BOR in NI	H of P&R H of P&R, H of L&C				
C18	Monitoring implementation of Children's Strategy	Establish mechanism for advising government on implementation of CS	Q1	Mechanism established and regular meetings held. NICCY advising on implementation of Strategy.	H of P&R				

		Monitoring implementation of Strategy	Q1-4		H of P&R				
C19	Influence government policy and practice to deliver more effectively on children's rights and best interests	Produce responses to key government consultations on NICCY's priority areas	Q1-4	Produce 12 consultation responses	H of P&R				
		Involve NICCY Youth Panel in consultation responses where appropriate.	Q1-4	Children and Young People have direct say in decisions that affect their lives	H of C&P and H of P&R				
		Provide evidence to Gov. committees on NICCY's priority areas	Q1-4	Produce 6 evidence papers	H of P&R				
C20	Ensure findings of Child Rights Review influence policy and practice relating to children	Develop and implement communications / advocacy plan	Q1	Recommendations acted upon	H of P&R				
		Produce 4 policy papers from the Review	Q2-3	Papers produced	H of P&R				
C21	Ensure NICCY's legal powers and function effectively promote	Actively consider opportunities to use legal powers and function in	Q1-4	CYP have greater access to specialist support and advice on their rights	H of L&C				

	and safeguard children's rights	conjunction with Priorities. Identify strategic use of full range of Legal powers with regard to rights and best interests of CYP ; from Casework and other sources	Q1-4	C&YP's legal rights promoted and safeguarded	H of L&C				
C22	Ensure Children and Young People have access to appropriate advice and support	Maintain and develop existing individuals complaints and advocacy service	Q1-Q4	C&YP and their carers receive individual and confidential resolution services	H of L&C				
		Participation on Advocacy Network with VOYPIC and others		Advocacy and representations on behalf of CYP strengthened and promoted.	H of L&C				
		Pilot 6 targeted Outreach Complaints Clinics	Q1-Q4	C&YP have their say directly about issues affecting them. Resolve individual issues; promote an increased understanding of rights for C&YP	H of L&C / C&P				
C23	BINOCC Joint Activity	Commissioner's joint BINOCC working programme agreed		Work programme agreed and implemented.	Commissioner				

C24	Promote and protect NICCY's corporate reputation and raise awareness of the role and functions of the office of the Commissioner with key stakeholders	Review and update communication strategy for 09-10	Q1	Strategies complete	H of C&P				
		Review and update and participation (with children and young people) strategies							
		Further develop processes required to manage and coordinate how NICCY communicates our work and priorities	Q2	Build public support/relations and mutual understanding of NICCY's priority actions and work with these stakeholders and influence change	H of C&P				
		Develop and coordinate a rolling programme to inform politicians and media of our work	Q2						
		Explore possibility of undertaking a stakeholder awareness survey	Q4	Business case for survey complete.	H of C&P				
		Proactively seek opportunities to engage and gain support of other stakeholders through Partnership events, media and Public		Build good public relations with a range of partners	H of C&P				

		Affairs activities							
		Undertake an education programme to inform understanding of NICCY's legislation	Q1-4	Establish greater understanding and awareness of NICCY's role, powers and function on behalf of CYP	H of L&C				
		Undertake Schools Awareness Programme	Q1-3	NICCY promotional materials delivered to every Year 8 pupil in NI	H of C&P				
		Identify and produce an appropriate and targeted range of corporate Publications in hard copy or multi media format	Q1-4	Produce and publish a range of materials as required	H of C&P				
		Develop and maintain NICCY's online presence as part of the corporate communication strategy	Q1	Complete and launch NICCY's new website to encourage enhanced engagement and interactivity with stakeholders	H of C&P				
			Q2-4	Maintain and continue to develop new web site as a key communications tool					
			Q1-4	Develop opportunities to use social network sites as a way of engaging with children and young people where they are					
C25	Raise awareness of the Commissioner's	Develop and plan opportunities for the	Q1-4	Better awareness of the role of the Commissioner and her work	H of C&P / Commissioner				

	outward facing role.	Commissioner to promote her role including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- keynote speeches- media opportunities- presentation/ evidence to stakeholder groups, e.g. Assembly committees							
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Budget Requirement 2009/10
(To be agreed with OFMdfM)

Expenditure	Amount (£)	To be Funded by OFMdfM Grant -in-Aid (£)
Salaries & Wages	927,360	927,360
General Overheads	372,751	372,751
Premises	318,889	318,889
Programme Costs		
• Communications & Participation	85,000	85,000
• Legal & Complaints	50,000	50,000
• Research Service and Policy Review	55,000	55,000
Sub Total	190,000	190,000
TOTAL	1,809,000	1,809,000

Glossary of Abbreviations

BOR	Bill of Rights
C&YP	Children and Young People
CE	Chief Executive
CRIA	Child Rights Impact Assessment
DE	Department of Education
H of C&P	Head of Communications And Participation
H of L & C	Head of Legal and Complaints Department
H of P&R	Head of Research Service and Policy Review Department
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information Communication Technology
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NIAO	Northern Ireland Audit Office
NICCY	Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children & Young People
NYP	NICCY Youth Panel
OFMdfM	Office of the First Minister deputy First Minister
PDF	Portable Document Format
Q1	Quarter of business year
SMT	Senior Management Team
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
VOYPIC	Voice of the Young Person in Care