



COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

22 Annual 23 Report & Accounts

for the Year Ended **31st March 2023**

Company Registration No. NI24026

Charity No. 107530

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council
Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2023

Presented to The Northern Ireland Assembly by the Community Relations Council on 23rd
November 2023



The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Index to the Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2023

	Page
1. General information	2
2. Chair's foreword	3-4
3. Chief Executive's comment	5-7
4. Strategic Report	
4.1 Performance Overview	8-13
4.2 Performance analysis	14-25
4.3 Sustainability Report	25
5. Directors' Report	26
5.1 Corporate Governance Report	
5.1.1 Trustee's and Directors' Report	26-31
5.1.2 Statement of Accounting Officer's & Directors' Responsibilities	31-32
5.1.3 Governance Statement	32-45
5.2 Remuneration and Staff Report	
5.2.1 Remuneration Report	45-49
5.2.2 Staff Report	50-52
5.3. Assembly Accountability Disclosure Notes	
5.3.1 Overview	53
5.3.2 Independent Auditor's Report	54-58
6. Accounts	
6.1 Statement of Financial Activities	59
6.2 Balance Sheet	60
6.3 Cash Flow Statement	61
7. Notes to the Accounts	61-81
8. Appendix 1: Additional Disclosure to comply with FReM	81-85
9. Appendix 2: 2022/23 Grant List	86-101

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

General Information

Chair	M McDonald
Registered office	Equality House Shaftesbury Square Belfast BT2 7DP
Auditors	Comptroller and Auditor General Northern Ireland Audit Office 106 University Street Belfast BT7 1EU
Solicitors	Lewis Silkin 220 Ormeau Road Belfast BT7 2FY
Principal bankers	Bank of Ireland Donegal Place Belfast
Charity number	107530
Company registration number	NI24026
Website:	https://www.community-relations.org.uk/

Chair's Foreword

As we end the 2022-23 financial year it is appropriate to reflect back upon another successful year for the Community Relations Council (CRC) in its efforts to continue peacebuilding and social cohesion across our society as part of Government's T:BUC (Together: Building a United Community) Strategy delivered through The NI Executive Office (TEO). The Chief Executive, Jacqueline Irwin has covered the advances made in her annual report and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her and all our staff for their collective input into enabling CRC to meet its targets over the last year.

As we returned to meetings in person as well as online this year it was good to engage with our client base and partners on the ground. The resilience shown by community peace builders right across Northern Ireland has been remarkable to witness and signifies a very strong infrastructure for continued peace building and reconciliation.

CRC Board has completed its first 3-year term and has developed into a very cohesive group of Directors providing strategic direction to TEO staff as they navigate the implementation of our Strategy and Corporate Plan. At this point in time and in the absence of Ministers and an Executive, TEO have been unable to appoint members to a second term within CRC. However, I am pleased to note that our directors and I have agreed with TEO to have their first term extended on a 6 monthly basis to ensure business continuity in the short-term.

I would like to take this opportunity as we approach the end of another year to remember two people who have been intricately involved with CRC and a lot of other organisations on our journey to educate our children, remember the past and learn lessons for the future.

It was with great sadness that we learnt about the death of Baroness May Blood, a great champion of community relations. May devoted a significant part of her life to community relations and education. She was a remarkable woman and the first from Northern Ireland to be given a life peerage. May's tireless work with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) has been an inspiration to us all.

The Community Relations Council was honoured to have awarded May the Good Relations Award 2021 for her selfless work and for being a champion of community relations in Northern Ireland. Her comments on receipt of that award are worthy of attention and remembrance:

"My passion for the past 20 years has been integrated education. The work that the community relations people are doing, and the work that the people in integrated education are doing – is the vital work. We are building a foundation for a better Northern Ireland. We want to change Northern Ireland and integrated education is certainly moving in that direction."

Dr Éamon Phoenix, winner of the Good Relations Award in 2022 unfortunately also died suddenly leaving not only an enormous personal gap for his family but a big professional gap for his colleagues.

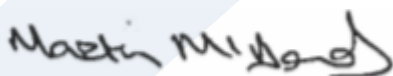
Éamon was a political historian and broadcaster, and an Irish News columnist. He was a member of and sole northern person on the Taoiseach's Expert Advisory Group on Commemorations and a noted author on modern Irish history. His knowledge and understanding of Irish history and particularly the home rule crisis in its widest context was considered encyclopedic by his peers.

Previously he was Head of Lifelong Learning at Stranmillis College. During this time, he pioneered combining modern Irish history and adult learning by collaborating with people from diverse backgrounds, guiding, challenging, and supporting participants through site visits in Belfast and Dublin to broaden their understanding of the island. Éamon worked tirelessly during his lifetime to build a public understanding of Irish History and to communicate this through for example, engaging lectures, TV programmes, radio and podcast interviews, and study trips and visits.

Éamon delivered the annual NI Assembly Speaker lecture on the Decade of Centenaries and also spoke at the events hosted jointly by the Speakers of the Dáil Eireann and the NI Assembly. He also designed public lecture series for Belfast City Council including The Somme, The Rising, the King's speech.

Éamon's approach combined a deep respect for his audience and their knowledge and understanding, while adding local context and stories to the major issues and events of the time of the broader context. As far afield as Armagh, Mid Ulster, Omagh and Lisburn and Castlereagh he was able to weave the local and the broad context together in a way that enables the audience to question and speak to one another in a safe space. May he rest in peace in the knowledge that his legacy will have a lasting impact upon us all.

I am delighted as Chair to present this year's Annual Report which gives detail on how we have managed our finances, governance, and risk matters in a comprehensive way in line with government requirements. Our performance indicators confirm how we have met our obligations, both to our sponsor Department and the local groups we fund. Can I conclude by thanking my fellow Board members for their support and co-operation over the last year. Our relationship with our sponsor department, TEO, continues to flourish and augurs well as we all collectively consider the review of the TBUC Strategy in the coming months.



Martin McDonald

Chair

Community Relations Council

Chief Executive's Comment

The last few weeks of the 2022-23 financial year were full of events to mark the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. There is always a balance to be struck between remembering the past, responding well to the present and planning for a better future. People differ on where that balance should be struck, as the feedback about the 25th anniversary showed. Our point of view is affected by how we individually experienced the time before the signing of the Agreement, what has happened to us since then, and how optimistic we are now about the future. There is no right or wrong perspective. The constant challenge lies in accepting that there are different views; that this will always be the case; and that we will always work better together when we take this into account: that was perhaps the most important lesson of the Agreement.

Although we reached a political agreement 25 years ago, the time since has shown that many aspects of our conflict remain to be resolved. Thankfully, the use of violence has been rejected by the vast majority in our society but sadly not yet everyone, as we saw again this year. The Agreement did not mark the end of peacebuilding, it did not even mark the beginning of it. The peace that was built before the Agreement was signed was an essential foundation to reaching the political accord (as was the weariness with the conflict). The peace-building work that has gone on since then has shown how long it takes to learn to live together well; how easy and often we slip; and how differently people experienced the past and the times we live in now. Peace processes are not linear, they are not guaranteed; they are not experienced in the same way, at the same time, by everyone.

Young people who did not live through the events leading up to and after the signing of the Agreement will view the discussions during the anniversary differently to those of us who did. For them it is largely someone else's story, mythologised by some (because we are all skilled at passing on our version of history) and ignored by others who are focused on the concerns of today and the future.

What will come next? With such a mixture of experiences, perspectives, and levels of engagement, the challenge is to identify and keep focused on the peace-building issues of now. To do so we must keep refreshing our approach to peace-building and good relations to ensure it is relevant to the times we live in. We must carry the lessons of our history into the future in a way that is appropriate and not bound by the past. As we face into the next challenging financial year, the Community Relations Council is in listening mode. As the impact of the budget cuts become evident across the region and projects that have been relied on by so many begin to disappear, we will need to bring our years of experience to bear in deciding on the most effective things to do now. The next chapter of peacebuilding is already being written. What do we want to be said about it in 25 years from now?

As an Arm's Length body of The Executive Office, the Community Relations Council is a key delivery partner responsible for funding programmes across the region that tackle sectarianism, racism, and to build good community relationships now and for the future. As this report demonstrates, in 2022-23 we continued to manage our resources well, accounting for them to the high standard required of public bodies and reported our

sponsoring department and others in a timely and transparent way. This year we welcomed the opportunity to safely meet again with colleagues in the community relations network as we incorporated the changes developed during the Covid-19 pandemic into our agile working method. We now routinely deliver our services on-line and in person.

We continue to be inspired by the energy and commitment shown by those we fund. They continue to develop practical ways to integrate their work on building cross-community relationships with the delivery of other services vital to local needs. This is not new; good community relationships have always been an important foundation to the most effective delivery of other services, but they will be even more essential as we face into 2023-24 and the current public sector funding crisis.

The search for common ground and shared humanity will continue in 2023-24. Many of the problems faced in 2022-23, including the ongoing collapse of the NI Executive, the impact of the war in Ukraine, and the rising environmental challenges will continue to be a feature of the work in 2023-24. The Community Relations Council is playing its part in the environmental challenge, learning how to deliver our services in a sustainable way and based on the knowledge we already apply to community relations work: small actions taken by a large number of people can bring about positive change.

In 2022-23 127 organisations and projects that received funding totalling £2,323,278 across our grant schemes: Community Relations and Cultural Diversity (CR/CD) Small Grant Scheme, the Core Funding Grant Scheme, the Pathfinder Scheme, the Publications and Media Scheme and The Executive Office's North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme. We continued to be a hub for the exchange of learning and best practice, providing online and in-person development and engagement opportunities to our funded groups, community practitioners, policymakers, academics, and wider networks. During the year we organised three meetings of the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) Engagement Forum on behalf of The Executive Office. The complex weave of perspectives necessary to reflect the diversity of our community is represented in the themes and participation in the Forum which continues to be a platform for structured engagement between those involved in the design of the policy and the practitioners working on various aspects of delivery.

Good Relations Week 2022 incorporated 264 events and this year we were able to have delivered them in-person as well as online. The steering group included representatives from The Executive Office, the Department for Communities, the Department for Justice, the Education Authority, Nerve Centre, Libraries NI, Cathedral Quarter Trust, and T:BUC Young Ambassadors, NI Environment Link, The Rainbow Project, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, and Another World Belfast. As always, we are grateful to the steering group and everyone else who contributed to the week without them the week couldn't take place.

Our communication channels remained an important aspect of our work, and our website, twitter and e-news continued to be a valued source of information. Our website attracted 25,766 users and 67,819 page views. We had 2,345 subscribers to our monthly email newsletter, 7,813 followers on Twitter with post impressions of 348,400 and 3,900 followers on Facebook with a post reach of 308,800.

This year we concluded our work on the Decade of Centenaries project which has been run jointly with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Details of the many useful resources developed during the project are now available on our website. This year sadly we also lost Dr. Eamon Phoenix. Eamon made an amazing contribution to the body of work undertaken during the decade project. Such was his personal contribution that the CRC was delighted to award him the Community Relations Award for exceptional achievement. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of our history and was called on by so many of us to help with our events during the project. Eamon always managed to pick out some moment in history that perfectly captured the complex, often contradictory nature of our story. I could not here begin to capture the enormous contribution Eamon made. We are forever in his debt, privileged to have worked with him, continuing to miss him at each and every gathering and honoured to have some small examples of his wonderful perspectives and oratory in our web archive.

This year we were also sorry to hear of the death of another previous Good Relations Award recipient, Baroness May Blood. The Community Relations Council was honoured to have awarded May the Good Relations Award 2021 for her selfless work and for being a champion of community relations in Northern Ireland. The Good Relations Award highlights exceptional achievement in promoting community relations, intercultural work, and peacebuilding – Baroness Blood was a shining example. May devoted a significant part of her life to community relations and education. She was a remarkable woman and the first from Northern Ireland to be given a life peerage. May's tireless work with the Integrated Education Fund (IEF) was an inspiration to us all.

The Community Relations Council is grateful to colleagues in The Executive Office, our work in 2022-23 could not have been done without their valued support. I am also grateful to our Chair, Martin McDonald, and the Board members for their support and guidance during the year. As always, I am also grateful to my fellow staff members for their continued commitment to building good community relations.



Jacqueline Irwin

Chief Executive and Accounting Officer

Strategic Report

i) Performance Overview

The directors are pleased to present their Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023. This overview section gives a summary on the creation of the Community Relations Council, its aims and objectives, the risks it currently faces and its achievements over the 2022-23 year.

Principal Activities

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council was established by government in 1990 as an independent charity and a company limited by guarantee.

The overall aim for the Community Relations Council, as set out in its Articles of Association, is the advancement of education and of other charitable purposes beneficial to the community in Northern Ireland (“the area of benefit”), and in particular, but not so as to limit the generality of the foregoing, the advancement of education in, and the understanding of, the different cultural traditions of the peoples of the area of benefit and the improvement of community relations in the area of benefit.

The Board of the Community Relations Council has nine members, meets every six weeks and is supported by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Community Relations Council is responsible for delivery of the organisation's strategy and is supported by three Directors: Director of Funding and Development, Director of Community Engagement and Director of Finance, Administration and Personnel. The staffing structure of the Community Relations Council is currently made up of 17 employees as presented in the organisation chart shown on page 13. The Community Relations Council encourages and develops employees to enhance the contribution they make to the Community Relations Council's work and the issues important to developing good community relations. Although this is a small team, the Community Relations Council routinely works in partnership across the region with other bodies that have good relations objectives.

Following the relaxation of the government's Covid-19 advice that people should work from home whenever possible, the Community Relations Council delivered its 2022-23 operational plan in an agile mix of on-line and in-person activities. This approach has enabled the organisation to deliver a more sustainable programme that will reduce our impact on the environment.

Review of activities

Strategic Plan 2020-24

The Community Relations Council takes its planning objectives from “Together: Building a United Community” (T:BUC) published by The Executive Office in 2013. Following public consultation, the 2020-23 strategic plan for the Community Relations Council was approved in January 2021. It sets out the strategic objectives of the Community Relations Council in the context of T:BUC and provides the strategic context for the work delivered by the Community Relations Council during 2022-23. With the agreement of The Executive Office CRC's 2020-23 Strategic Plan has been extended to 2024 to facilitate alignment with the outcome of the Department's review of Together: Building a United Community.

The Community Relations Council promotes good relations among the citizens and communities of Northern Ireland and supports the delivery of the Programme for Government (PfG) and the T:BUC strategy. To fulfil these aims the Community Relations Council focuses on the following areas of activity set out in our 2020-24 Strategic Plan:

- a) Distribution of funding, in collaboration with The Executive Office, to build and support good community relationships
- b) Promotion of learning, best practice and assist good communication between all relevant sectors and Government in the delivery of the T:BUC Strategy and good relations outcomes
- c) Ensuring the efficient and effective use of public resources allocated to it by operating to the highest standard of corporate governance in line with relevant guidance and best practice.

Business Plan 2022-23

The business model employed by the Community Relations Council to ensure delivery of its key priorities and achievement of its objectives is implemented through three key functional activities; Funding and Development; Community Engagement; and Finance, Administration and Personnel.

The Community Relations Council's 2022-23 Business Plan had the following three strategic objectives:

- a) Delivering funding that contributes to sustainable development, well-being and the common good by building and supporting good community relationships.
- b) Supporting effective delivery and learning between all sectors and government to assist implementation of the Programme for Government and T:BUC strategy.
- c) Ensuring the efficient and effective use of allocated resources and public expenditure by ensuring that CRC delivers a well governed, trusted and effective public service.

Risk and Uncertainty

The Community Relations Council, as a community relations development organisation with a funding role, must be prepared to deal with opportunities and risks associated with the nature of its work. The Community Relations Council’s appetite for risk is determined by the belief that it is not possible to eliminate risk. There will always be a level of residual risk associated with the work that cannot be eliminated but may be mitigated to an acceptable level.

A series of risks related to delivery of the Community Relations Council’s objectives were managed during the year. The Community Relations Council has identified the following as the principal risks and uncertainties facing the organisation at 31st March 2023:

Risk	Impact	Mitigations
Resources - Financial	In developing a business case to implement Department of Finance Pay Remit guidance it has become apparent that employees’ pension schemes and pension contributions is a complicated and dynamic area, and as such the financial implications have significant inherent uncertainty.	The Community Relations Council will continue to work with The Executive Office and Department of Finance to achieve full compliance with Department of Finance guidance.
Resources - Human Resource	This risk considers the impact of staffing issues within CRC.	CRC’s temporary Finance Manager began full time on Wednesday 8 th March 2023. CRC received a resignation from the Director of Funding and Development at the end of March 2023.
Resource – Financial	This risk considers the impact of the increase in External Audit Fee	The Chair raised this matter with TEO. TEO is now investigating whether this is a widespread issue across ALBs. Since then, the Audit Office has written to CRC outlining the costs for 2022-23 audit.
Resources – Human Resource	This risk considers the impact of recent correspondence relating to the NILGOSC Pension Scheme	CRC has received legal correspondence about the effects of changes made to pensions as a result of the enactment of the Public Service Pensions Act (NI) 2014. Legal advice has been taken. CRC’s solicitors drafted a response to the correspondence. With the approval of the Chair, the submission was made to the Tribunal Service on Friday 25 th November 2022. This letter has been shared with Board members.
Resource – Financial	This risk considers the impact CRC faces in terms of the 2023/24 budget from The Executive Office. Resource budget confirmation - £2,998k confirmed on 28 th September 2023. GIA (Grant-In-Aid – Cash) £3,033k confirmed on 27 th September 2023	TEO announced that the Department would likely face a 10%-15% cut to their budget. CRC have incurred a 10% cut to Resource & Cash budgets in 2023-24

A more detailed explanation of the Community Relations Council's Internal Control and Risk Management process, including the Community Relations Council's principal risks and uncertainties, is included on pages 39 to 45.

The Community Relations Council monitors its performance by comparing actual performance to targeted performance as detailed in the 2022-23 business plan. Performance against business plan targets is reported through the management team to the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Board and The Executive Office. Where comparison between targeted and planned performance has indicated a risk that a business plan objective may not be achieved then mitigating action will be taken and if necessary, reported on the risk register.

Going Concern

The Executive Office wrote to the Community Relations Council confirming that funding had been secured for the 2023-24 financial year. The Board is satisfied that the Community Relations Council is a going concern on the basis that it has a reasonable expectation that the Community Relations Council will continue to operate for the foreseeable future. In January 2020-21 the Community Relations Council received Ministerial approval for the 2020-23 Strategic Plan from The Executive Office. The Executive Office has agreed that the Strategic Plan should be extended for 1 year to allow time for the alignment of the next strategic plan with the outcome of the review of Together: Building a United Community and the next Programme for Government. Based on this agreement, the 2023-24 business plan is at an advanced stage of preparation and is with The Executive Office officials pending Ministerial approval. The financial statements are therefore prepared on the going concern basis.

The Restricted Pension Reserve, which is the valuation of the company's pension scheme at 31st March 2023 shows a funding surplus of £194,000. The surplus represents the difference between the pension fund and the value of its underlying assets. With effect from 1st April 2019, The Executive Office has provided a guarantee to Northern Ireland Local Government Office Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) in respect of any deficit. In the event that the Community Relations Council becomes insolvent or enters into liquidation, The Executive Office will pay to NILGOSC any unpaid scheme liabilities. The guarantee mitigates the Community Relations Council's solvency and liquidity risk in respect of the Restricted Pension Reserve.

Summary Performance Appraisal

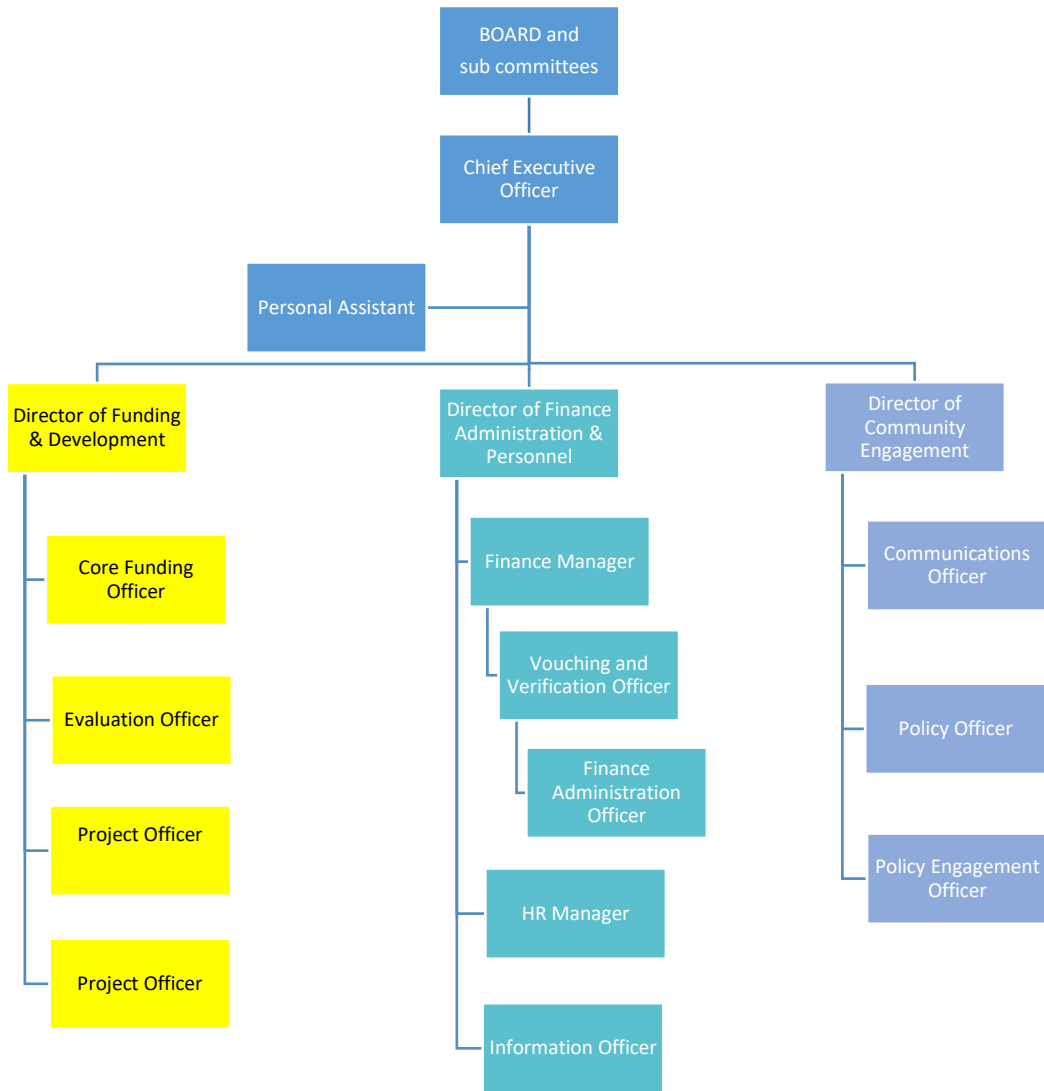
During the year the Community Relations Council achieved delivery of 19 key performance indicators (KPIs).

This included the following achievements:

- 100% of applications for 2023/24 Core Funding has been processed within the agreed timescale. A total of 31 awards have been made with a value of £1,381,520.
- A total of 74 CR/CD small grants, Media, and Publications grants applications awarded funding in 2022/23.
- Over the year 402 people attended the three Together: Building a United Community Engagement Forums, 19% new attendees, with 99% rating the Engagement Forum as good, very good or excellent.
- CRC's Good Relations Week 2022 took place from 20th to 26th September on the theme of UN Sustainability Goals. 264 registered events took place with 95% of attendees stating they would recommend Good Relations Week as a positive opportunity for groups and individuals.
- Two Shared Learning Events took place with CRC staff and The Executive Office colleagues on the topic of Good Relations work and Sustainability Goals.
- 44% of CRC Newsletter subscribers are highly engaged in and regularly open the monthly eNews.
- CRC's Internal Audits all received a 'satisfactory' assurance. These reports related to: Finance and Complaints Handling; Grant Administration; IT and Continuation Planning. Only priority three recommendations were received, and these have been followed up.
- 84.2% annual budget allocated to funding and engagement activities.

The continued downward pressures on public sector finance are always a risk to the Community Relations Council being able to deliver its full strategic ambition. Strained relationships and other pressures in the political arena also represent a risk to community relations. These risks are considered as part of the Community Relations Council's risk management process, with additional mitigating actions identified and reported to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

Organisation Chart



ii) PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

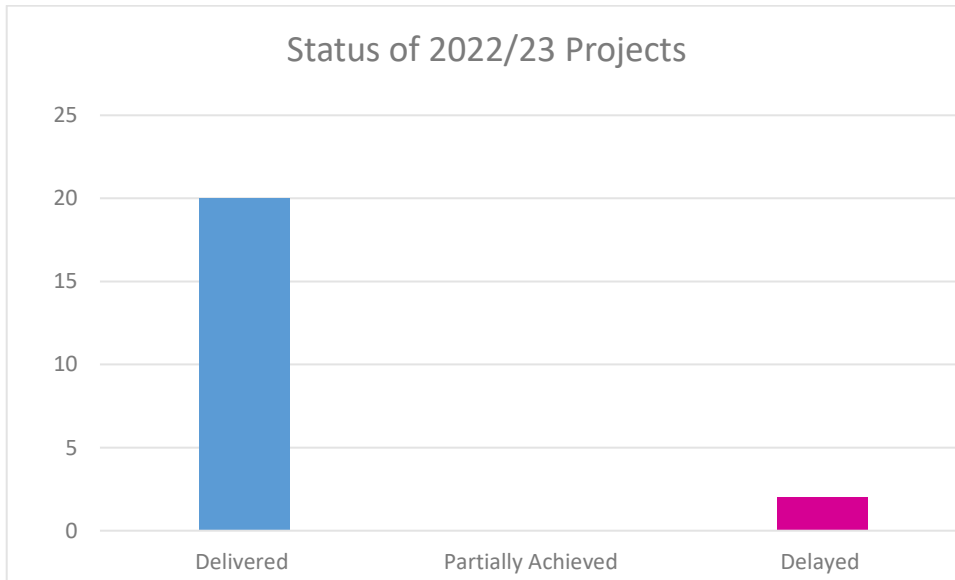
A) Summary

The key undertakings during 2022-23 to deliver on the Community Relations Council's priorities included:

1. the Executive Office funding provided to the Community Relations Council for 2022-23 was distributed to assist with achievement of the Programme for Government (PfG) and T:BUC strategic outcomes;
2. the Community Relations Council supported the implementation of the T:BUC Strategy and related PfG outcomes by providing policy feedback to TEO through a series of events including the T:BUC Engagement Forum, inputting to relevant T:BUC sub-groups and giving guidance on good relations best practice to relevant stakeholders;
3. the Community Relations Council delivered the annual Good Relations week with a mixture of online and in-person events in collaboration with The Executive Office, the Department for Communities, the Department of Justice, NI Environment Link, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, The Rainbow Project, Another World Belfast, and the Education Authority. The week successfully encouraged and celebrated good relations;
4. the Community Relations Council co-ordinated the Decade of Commemoration project and hosted the interagency roundtable that ensured information was shared across stakeholders;
5. project resources continue to be disseminated to share learning and best practice within and between relevant public bodies and the voluntary and community sector;
6. the Community Relations Council delivered its work with a commitment to a public service ethos – transparency, accountability, equality, efficiency including managing ongoing financial pressures in 2022-23;
7. the Community Relations Council implemented changes to its Assurance and Accountability processes, including updates to its risk management strategy, defining its risk appetite, revising the risk register and the introduction of assurance statements and delivery reports at the Directorate Level;
8. the Community Relations Council, with the approval of the Board, agreed a paper setting out CRC's commitment to sustainability and making a number of pledges related to the environment, health, and our shared earth.
9. following consultation with its employees the Community Relations Council completed a series of projects to enhance its employee engagement framework.

The 2022-23 business plan was laid out in the three strategic areas, Funding; T:BUC Engagement; and Delivery and Trusted and Effective Public Service and Good Governance.

The performance of the Community Relations Council is set out in the chart below which summarises stages of completion of each of the projects undertaken during 2022-23. Further detail for each project is given on pages 16 to 25.



Long Term Expenditure Trend

Long term Expenditure Analysis	<u>2019-20</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2022/23</u>	<u>2023/24 Projections</u>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Grants	2,115	2,103	2,252	2,323	1,931
Programme Costs	79	54	76	60	24
Salaries	841	892	979	909	798
Overheads	263	242	296	288	216
Total Expenditure	3,299	3,291	3,603	3,580	2,969

Since 2016-17 the Community Relations Council has been allocated £670K for NBSGRP grant awards without receiving additional resource to administer the scheme.

During this extended period of financial constraint, the Community Relations Council continues to protect, as far as possible, resources being allocated to funded groups by minimising cuts to grants and programme costs. The Community Relations Council awarded £2,337k in grants (cash awards) during the 2022-23 financial year being 3.7% more than prior year.

B) Detailed Performance Analysis

The directors are pleased to present Detailed Performance Analysis for the year ended 31st March 2023. This analysis section provides detail on the performance of the Community Relations Council by its key functions and objectives during the 2022-23 year.

Key Performance Indicators

The Community Relations Council Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are included in the annual business plan. Performance against those indicators is reported to the Board and to The Executive Office each quarter. The risk management process is designed to ensure that sufficient internal control is in place to manage uncertainty in achieving the Community Relations Council’s KPIs and to identify additional action where necessary.

Programme for Government

The Community Relations Council's KPIs have an outcome focus that aims to ensure that work undertaken by the organisation leads to a real difference to society. Peace-building and improving community relations contribute to the conditions in which all of the Programme for Government (PfG) indicators and outcome are more likely to be achieved. There are, however, a number of draft PfG indicators and outcomes to which the work of the Community Relations Council is particularly relevant:

Indicators		Outcomes
1. Reduce crime (relevant to CRC, crime motivated by sectarianism or racism)	30. Improve our attractiveness as a destination	7. We have a safe community where we respect the law and each other
26. Increase respect for each other	31. Increase shared space	9. We are a shared, welcoming and confident society that respects diversity
27. Improve cultural participation	35. Increase reconciliation	10. We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest
28. Increase the confidence and capability of people and communities	40. Improve our international reputation	

The Community Relations Council’s annual business plan contributes towards the delivery of the Together: Building a United Community strategy’s priorities and associated outcomes. The strategy outlines how Government, community and individuals will work together to build a united community and achieve change.

Funding and Development

In 2022-23 the Community Relations Council delivered the Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Small Grant Scheme, the Core Funding Grant Scheme, the Pathfinder Scheme, the

Publications and Media Scheme and, on behalf of The Executive Office, the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme (NBSGRP). In total, 127 organisations and projects received funding offers of £2,323,000.

Thirty-one organisations received grants awards of £1,371,185 from the Core Fund and ten organisations received grant awards totalling £674,300 from NBSGRP. In addition to the Core Fund and NBSGRP schemes, the Community Relations Council awarded £173,551 in funding to 74 projects from 104 applications received under the CRCDC funding programme dealing with the legacy of the conflict, peace-building, tackling sectarianism and racism, and building good relations in our diverse community.

Since 1st April 2018, in collaboration with The Executive Office, the Community Relations Council is operating the Code of Practice for Reducing Bureaucracy. During the 2021-22 business year the Community Relations Council moved all of its processes online and in 2022-23 adopted procedures that introduce a risk-based approach to verification of expenditure.

Grant Expenditure to date – District Council Areas 2022 - 2023

	Core	CRCD	Media	North Belfast	Pathfinder	Publications	Total
Multiple	332,792.78	39,748.00			46,568.52		419,109.30
Regional	702,198.97	46,250.23				8,881.00	757,330.20
Antrim and Newtownabbey	37,437.56	860.00					38,297.56
Ards and North Down							
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon	34,323.25	5,519.98					39,843.23
Belfast	161,025.14	54,143.85	10,000.00	674,300.00	29,819.00		929,287.99
Causeway Coast and Glens	40,529.88						40,529.88
Derry City and Strabane	62,877.13	16,649.69	4,954.37		18,040.00		102,521.19
Fermanagh and Omagh	5,474.00						5,474.00
Lisburn and Castlereagh City							
Mid and East Antrim							
Mid Ulster							
Newry Mourne and Down	4,905.25						4,905.25
Total	1,371,184.71	173,551.00	14,954.37	674,300.00	94,427.52	8,881.00	2,337,298.60

NB: Multiple Councils – the grant was awarded for projects taking place in 2 – 4 District Council areas

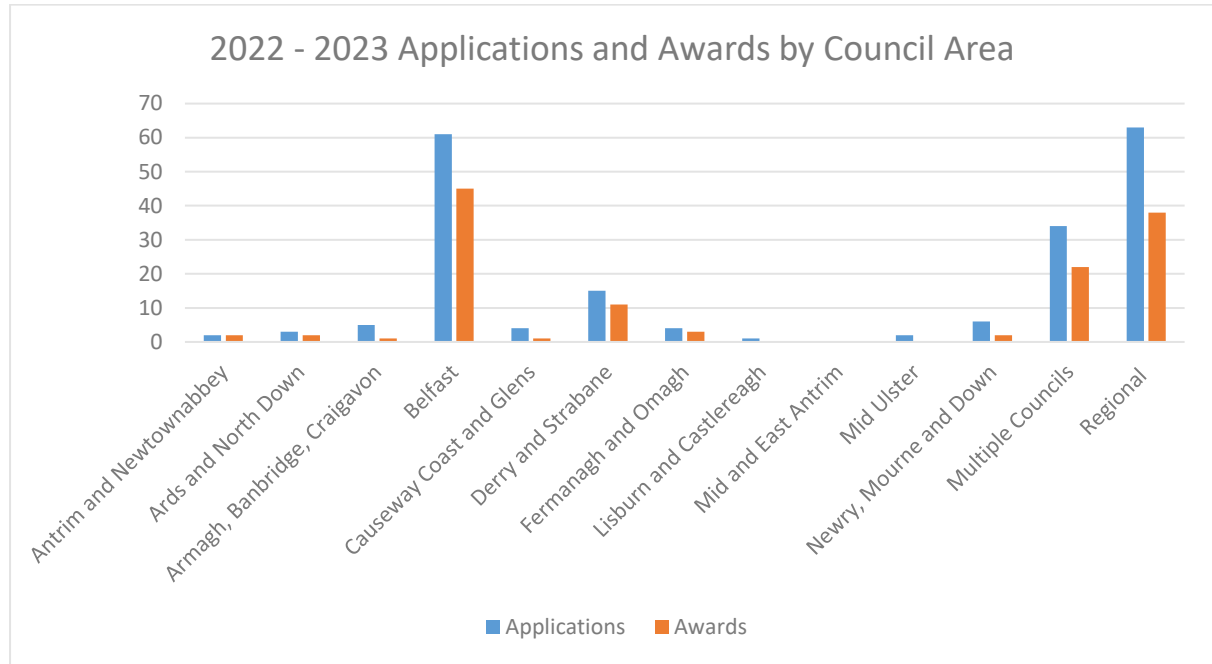
Regional Councils – the grant was awarded for projects taking place in 5 – 11 District Council areas

Where there are areas of low grant application the Community Relations Council has put in place welcoming statements to encourage community relations activity.

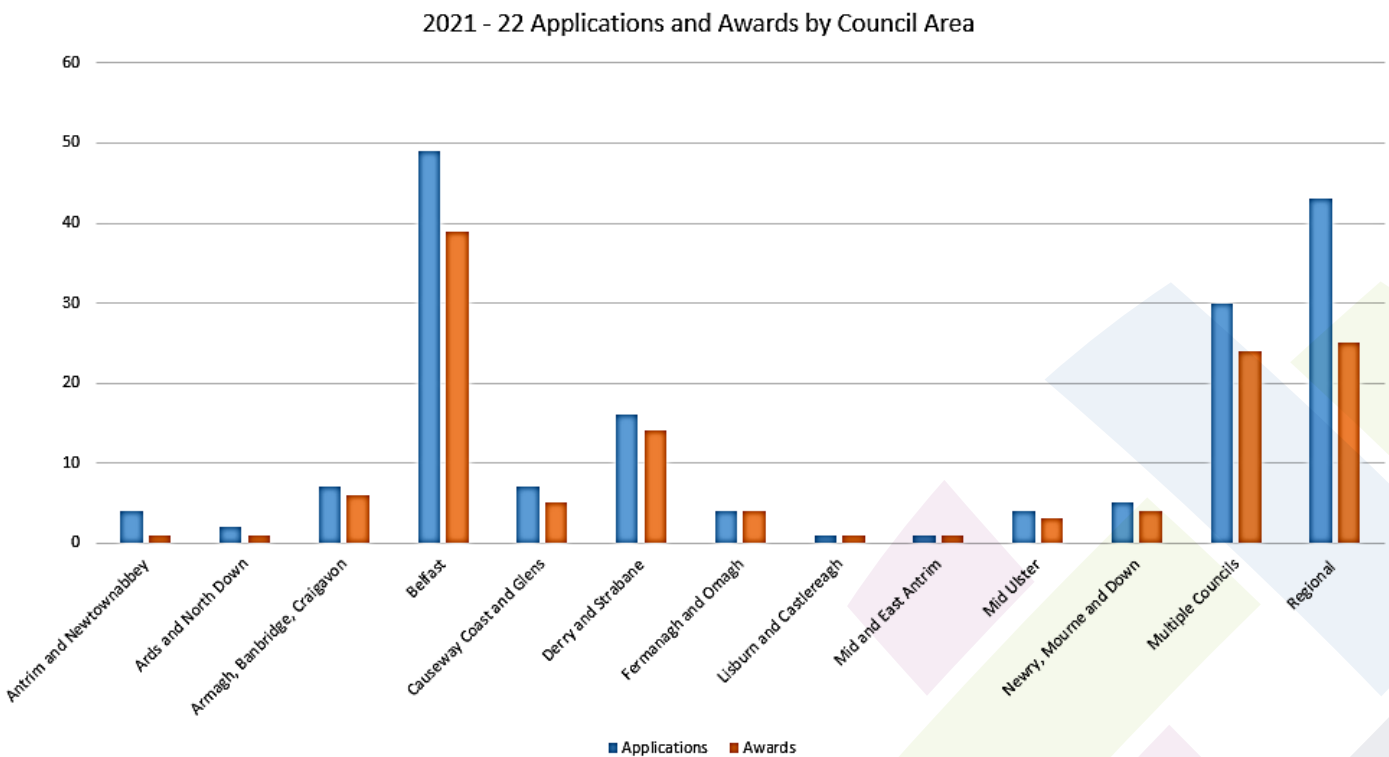
These numbers are detailed on pages 86-101 (Grants paid in 2022-2023). These are 'cash' accounting numbers versus 'resource' accounting numbers reported on page 70

FUNDING – Applications and Awards by Council Area

2022/23 Applications and Awards by Council Area



For comparison: 2021/22 Applications and Awards by Council Area



Performance Highlights

FUNDING - Performance Highlights			
Scheme	Applications Processed as planned		Total Funding
	Target	Performance	
Core Funding	48	48	£1,371,185
CRC	104	104	£173,551
NBSGRP	10	10	£674,300
Media	16	16	£14,954
Pathfinder	10	10	£94,428
Publications	12	12	£8,881
TOTAL	200	200	£2,337,299

Community Engagement

The Community Relations Council provides development support and engagement opportunities as a hub for the exchange of learning and best practice among our funded groups and wider networks. The relationship between policy, practice and reflective evaluation remains at the heart of the work of the Community Relations Council, well-crafted public policy and effective service delivery depends on it.

During the year the Community Relations Council coordinated and delivered three Engagement Forum events.

- 18th June 2022 online event was titled "Good Relations and the Business Sector."
- 20th September 2022 a hybrid T:BUC Engagement Forum was held, titled "Good Relations and the UN Sustainable Development Goals."
- 7th March 2023 in person T:BUC Engagement Forum on the theme of "T:BUC Plus Ten."

CRC's September T:BUC Engagement Forum was a hybrid event, hosted online and at the Stormont Hotel in Belfast. The event took place during Good Relations Week 2022 and considered how the UN Sustainable Development Goals and good relations work are interconnected.

CRC were delighted to have the co-author of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, David Donoghue speaking at the event. There was also input from Northern Ireland Environment Link, St Columb's Park House, Belfast City Council's Forth Meadow Greenway Initiative and The Cornfield Project.

The Engagement Forum provides a platform for formalised and structured engagement to influence positive outcomes from the T:BUC strategy through co-design, co-working and a shared learning approach. The diversity of those attending the meetings provides a broad and inclusive perspective that can assist with the achievement of the vision and aims of the T:BUC Strategy. The Community Relations Council continues to encourage a wide participation in the T:BUC Engagement Forum to reflect our community.

We also organise and facilitate a series of Shared Learning Forums for funded groups to meet and learn from each other's practice.

The annual Good Relations Week, co-ordinated by the Community Relations Council took place from 19th to 25th September 2022 with the theme of "Change Starts With Us". The Week is designed to showcase good practice and encourage wide engagement. The Community Relations Council was joined on the steering group by The Executive Office, the Department for Communities, the Department for Justice, the Education Authority, Libraries NI, The Cathedral Quarter Trust, The Nerve Centre. This year new members joined the steering group from NI Environment Link, The Rainbow Project, The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, and Another World Belfast. The launch of the week was also supported by every Council many of whom organised a local launch in their areas. The launch and the week of activities attracted extensive media coverage as well as coverage in the regional press.

The 2023 Good Relations Awards expanded to include five categories bringing in new partners with additional expertise to the assessment of the Award nominations. Panels met on 30th January 2023 and 2nd February 2023 to assess a total of 53 nominations received across all the categories. The Award recipients were announced at a special presentation event in Belfast Harbour Commissioners Office on 7th March 2023.

The email newsletter, eNews, has been issued every month during the year. The eNews covers CRC and T:BUC funding opportunities, as well as sharing stories of community-based groups and organisations who are working hard to build united communities at the local level.

Social media was also used to communicate our messages. The Community Relations Council has grown its Twitter and Facebook followers to 7,813 followers on Twitter and 3,900 followers on Facebook. Our website continues to grow as it provides a valuable resource for information, as well as keeping people up to date with news from the sector. During the year, the CRC website attracted 25,766 users and had 67,819 page views.

Our collaboration with National Lottery Heritage Fund on the "Decade of Centenaries" project came to an end after ten years.

To mark the achievements over the ten years CRC and Heritage Fund launched a new website titled www.principlesforremembering.com. This website is devoted to developing a continuing conversation around the issues of remembering in public space. It holds numerous case studies, videos and digital resources collected over the ten years of the project's existence.

The Community Relations Council this year continued its engagement with minority ethnic and faith communities particularly in relation to the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership.

T:BUC Engagement and Delivery

Objective	Output	Highlights
<p>In conjunction with TEO deliver the T:BUC Engagement Forum.</p>	<p>Three meetings of Engagement Forum were delivered on 18th June 2022, 20th September 2022 and 7th March 2023.</p> <p>Produced a summary report and production of key messages/evaluation document for each event.</p>	<p>Summary and key messages and evaluation documents were completed.</p> <p>Events were well attended with over 100 people taking part in each event. Attendees and participants included TEO staff, community practitioners, policy makers and academics amongst others.</p> <p>Over the year 458 people attended the 3 Engagement Forums.</p> <p>19% of attendees at the three T:BUC Engagement Forums were new.</p> <p>99% of attendees at the T:BUC EF rated the events as good, very good or excellent</p>
<p>Influence good relations policy outcomes by inputting to relevant PFG and T:BUC subgroups and providing information and feedback to relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p>Participating in the T:BUC Structures.</p> <p>Provided advice and shared learning opportunities.</p> <p>Guidance on funding requirements to funded groups.</p> <p>Collate and disseminate resources.</p> <p>Delivered four funding fairs.</p> <p>Delivered four online Shared Learning Events for core funded and North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme groups.</p>	<p>Throughout the year CRC provided support to funded groups including delivery of events online and face to face, online grant procedures, regular website updates, social media posts and the monthly eNews.</p> <p>A programme of 4 Shared Learning events was delivered. This year we were able to move these events into a hybrid format with in-person and online participation. 95% of participants rate the Shared Learning Events as very good, very good or excellent overall</p> <p>Funding fairs were delivered across the region focussing on areas of low grant uptake. We are pleased to work alongside Councils and community partners in delivering these events.</p>

Objective	Output	Highlights
<p>Promote Good Relations work through the delivery of Good Relations Week, the Good Relations Award and other activities.</p>	<p>Good Relations Week delivered in a hybrid format during September 2022. The week saw the delivery of a programme of engagement events, lessons learned and best practice with other groups and organisations within and connected to the community relations sector. An evaluation report was produced. 2023 Good Relations Award presentation event took place on 7th March 2022.</p>	<p>264 event listings covering every council area across a range of themes during Good Relations Week 2022. 213 print, online and broadcast media articles about the week. Positive feedback received in the event evaluation. 15 people recognised for their peacebuilding efforts and contribution through the 2023 Good Relations Awards. There was one winner and two runners up for each Award.</p>
<p>Co-ordinate and lead on the Decade of Commemorations Project (in collaboration with Heritage Lottery Fund).</p>	<p>Delivered an event to reflect on the Decade of Centenaries work and highlight the successful Principles for Remembering In Public Space. Project resources continue to be disseminated to share learning and best practice within and between relevant public bodies and the voluntary and community sector.</p>	<p>The Community Relations Council led the coordination of the project interagency round-table that ensured information was shared across stakeholders. The project was closed this year and the principles of remembering website was developed as a closing resource.</p>
<p>Engagement and communication with the sector via relevant media platforms.</p>	<p>Regularly update various social media platforms. News information produced and circulated widely. 12 Monthly eNews produced and distributed. New website developed New video content created.</p>	<p>Twitter Followers: 7,813. Facebook Followers: 3,900. Website Page Views: 67,819. Users 25,766 Email marketing subscribers: 2,345 Visit www.principlesforremembering.com New videos on CRC website and YouTube channel covering for example GR Award winners and CR/CD funded work.</p>

Peace Monitoring Report

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust has provided the Community Relations Council a grant award to fund two further editions of the Peace Monitoring Report. Production commenced during the 2021-22 business year when the authors were appointed following an open tender process. The authors have continued work on the report and plan to present a final draft in 2023. £29,350 of the funds received from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust have been treated as deferred income and are included within Accruals & Deferred Income on the Balance Sheet in the 2022-23 financial year.

Financial Summary

The Statement of Financial Activities on page 59 indicates that the company had incoming resources of £3,310,999 (2021-22 - £3,239,861) in the year. Note 2 on page 66 shows The Executive Office as being the sponsor of 98.7% (2021-22 99.5%) of this income. In line with the “Charities SORP FRS 102” the Community Relations Council recognises income as it is received and expenditure as it is incurred. As a result, income was exceeded by outgoing resources of £3,579,963 by £268,964 (2021-22 – income exceeded outgoing resources of £3,602,728 by £362,867)

The Community Relations Council was allocated a resource budget of £3,348,000 for the year to 31st March 2023 by The Executive Office. This budget funded net resource expenditure of £3,348,000 (excluding actuarial movements on the pension liability) which represented 100% of total funding allocated to The Community Relations Council by The Executive Office. The Community Relations Council was also allocated a capital budget of £10,000 for the year to 31st March 2023 by The Executive Office. This budget funded capital expenditure of £4,000.

The Balance Sheet on page 60 shows that the company had a fund deficit of £(366,449) at 31st March 2023 (2021-22 – deficit of £2,866,485). The organisation’s Restricted Reserve at 31st March 2023 was a deficit of £366,449 (2021-22 – deficit of £2,866,485) of which £560,449 was a deficit in the income reserve (2021-22 – a deficit of £480,485). The valuation of the company’s pension scheme as at 31st March 2023, for the purposes of IAS19, showed a funding surplus of £194,000 (2021-22 - deficit of £2,386,000).

This surplus represents the difference between the liabilities of the pension fund and the value of its underlying assets.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Community Relations Council is committed to complying with all its Human Rights and Equality obligations and best practice. The Community Relations Council applies its equal opportunities policy to prevent any instances of direct and indirect discrimination. The Community Relations Council applies its Equality Scheme which has been approved by ECNI. The scheme is developed in compliance with practice recommended by ECNI to promote equality and good relations as envisaged in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Community Relations Council applies its Disability Action Plan, which has been reviewed by ECNI.

The Community Relations Council monitors and applies its Fraud policy and procedures, including anti-bribery procedures, and subsequently provided training to all Community Relations Council employees. In addition to the Fraud policy, the Community Relations Council apply a suite of policies and procedures to ensure appropriate anti-corruption measures are taken including its Financial Manual, Procurement procedures and Whistleblowing procedures.

iii) Other matters – Sustainability report

The Community Relations Council is committed to the Northern Ireland Executive’s Sustainable Development Strategy and has introduced policies and practices to encourage efficiency in the use of resources. These include the 100% use of recycled paper and the introduction of multifunction printing/copying/scanning devices which are set to duplex printing. The Community Relations Council is located in Equality House, a modern office building in Belfast that houses other Arm’s Length Bodies. In doing so the Community Relations Council makes a contribution to Government targets for better use of its overall estate. The Community Relations Council participates in the Equality House facilities committee with the other Arm’s Length Bodies. The Community Relations Council has undertaken a number of projects to move its services online and away from paper-based processes. The realisation of the full benefits of these projects was hastened by the move to remote working due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The lack of travel and the use of online conferencing for events has also assisted our contribution to the sustainable development strategy.

Through its earlier work in preparation for its Strategic Plan 2020-23 the Community Relations Council has noted a substantial and growing interest in wider environmental issues, including concerns around climate change, global warming, sustainable development and recycling. In its strategic plan the Community Relations Council notes that the concepts of well-being and the common good provide a link between good relations and a wide range of other issues, including environmental issues. The Community Relations Council appointed an Environmental Champion who aims to improve and monitor the sustainability and environmental goals of the organisation. Since then, the Board has received and approved a paper setting out a strategy to improve CRC's environmental impact by: introducing a 'Digital First' policy to publications; eliminating the purchase or single use plastic; continue to implement a paperless office; explore the option of becoming a 'FairTrade' office; add criteria to the procurement policy relating to sustainability and environmental standards. The organisation has put in place a Hybrid Working Policy. This has been blended with office-based working in a manner that has a positive environmental impact. The Community Relations Council will continue to explore the interconnection between good relations and environmental issues.

.....
J Irwin - Accounting Officer

14th November 2023

.....
Date

.....
M McDonald - Chairperson

14th November 2023

.....
Date

DIRECTORS' REPORT

A) Corporate Governance Report

i) Trustee's and Directors' Report

Structure, Governance and Management

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council is a company limited by guarantee, with no share capital, and is registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act 2006, along with selected disclosures as recommended in the 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard FRS 102 (effective 2nd October 2019)'.

The Directors have complied with guidance published by the Charities Commission.

Organisational Structure

The Community Relations Council is governed by the Members of the Council. Where the Articles of Association refer to the Council, it can also be read as the Company, which shall mean the Members of the Council can also be read as the Directors of the Company.

The Council has capacity to register 24 members and there was a total of nine members in post during the year. The Council aims to meet every six weeks, holding at least six meetings during any 12-month period. A scheme of delegation is in place and day-to-day responsibility for provision of services rests with the Chief Executive, Jacqueline Irwin, supported by the Senior Management Team. The Senior Management Team consists of the Director of Funding and Development, Director of Community Engagement and Director of Finance, Administration and Personnel.

The Chief Executive, with the assistance of the Senior Management Team, manages the day-to-day activities of the Council and reports directly to the Chairperson. The Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team also provide progress reports to all Council meetings.

Directors

The directors of the company at 31st March 2023 were as follows:

Mr. Martin McDonald (Chair)	Mr. Michael McDonnell
Mr. Rory Campbell	Ms. Claire Harris
Ms. Audrey Simpson	Mr. John McCallister
Dr. Máire Braniff	Ms. Nisha Tandon
Ms Sheila McClelland	

Board members, including the Chair, are appointed by the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service following a recruitment exercise led by The Executive Office in a manner intended to comply fully with guidance from the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Northern Ireland (OCPANI). All current members took up their positions on 1st June 2019 and were appointed for three years. In the absence of Ministers to take decisions during 2022-23, The Executive Office has extended the term of office of all members to June 2024.

Following appointment, all directors receive 'On Board' training conducted by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), Equality and Recruitment training, conducted by ECNI, induction into the role by The Executive Office as it's Arm's Length Body and a full induction into the work of the Community Relations Council conducted by Community Relations Council staff. Induction training for new members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Community Relations Council is also provided into the work of those committees.

Statement of Grant Making Policies

The Community Relations Council provides grant aid and advice to voluntary and community groups in support of projects which have a community relations purpose or value. The Council has a variety of funding schemes each tailored to promote certain aspects of community relations:

- The Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Small Grant Scheme is intended to help community/voluntary groups in Northern Ireland develop their capacity to engage in community relations work and to enhance the community relations potential of projects they undertake. The maximum award payable for this grant is £10,000.
- The Core Funding Grant Scheme is designed to support voluntary and community organisations to develop community relations work in a strategic manner, on a regional basis. Support is specifically targeted at work to combat sectarianism in Northern Ireland on a strategic long-term basis. The amount awarded normally ranges between £20,000 and £85,000.
- The Publications Grant Scheme aims to encourage the production and dissemination of publications that will contribute to greater understanding and better community relations in Northern Ireland. The maximum award payable for this grant is £5,000.

- The Media Grant Scheme aims to assist with the dissemination of community relations priorities via print, broadcast or other widely accessible media. Three projects were supported this year.
- The Pathfinder Scheme contributes towards the salary and running costs of organisations or projects which are considered of strategic importance in promoting community relations work in Northern Ireland. The Pathfinder Scheme is not an open scheme to which groups can apply; discussion with the Director of the Funding and Development Programme will precede any proposal made to this scheme. This scheme also supports emergency intervention funding through small project grants.
- The North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme (NBSGRP) is a funding scheme administered by the Community Relations Council on behalf of The Executive Office. It is a Ministerial scheme, and its overall strategy remains with The Executive Office. The key aim of the Programme is to develop relations within and between communities in North Belfast. Responsibility for the administrative aspects of the Programme were transferred to the Community Relations Council during 2016-17. The programme made awards up to £108,000 during the 2022-23 financial year.

Details of the grants awarded during the 2022-23 financial year are shown on page 86.

Community Engagement

The Community Relations Council seeks to promote learning, best practice and good communication between all relevant sectors and government to assist effective implementation of the Programme for Government and T:BUC strategy by:

- providing development support and engagement opportunities as a hub for the exchange of learning and best practice among our funded groups and wider networks. The relationship between policy, practice and reflective evaluation remains at the heart of the work of the Community Relations Council, well-crafted public policy and effective service delivery depends on it;
- leading on the coordination and delivery of the T:BUC Engagement Forum events that bring together good relations practitioners, voluntary & community sector and government to assist effective implementation of the Programme for Government and T:BUC strategy;
- co-ordinating the annual Good Relations Week which takes place annually in September. The week is designed to showcase good practice and encourage wide engagement and this year, due to the pandemic, the week was moved the week online;
- co-ordinating the Good Relations Awards to highlight exceptional achievement in promoting community relations, intercultural work and peacebuilding in Northern Ireland; and

- promoting the work and the activities of the Community Relations Council and others within the sector through monthly email newsletters, its website and social media channels.

Future plans

As an Arm's Length Body of The Executive Office our strategic direction, confirmed by Ministers, is to be a key delivery agent for departmental good relations policy, including the implementation of the aims and objectives of the T:BUC strategy and an outcome based approach to delivery. This includes promoting policy through positive engagement with relevant stakeholders in the community and establishing and implementing best practice.

- The Community Relations Council will continue implementation of the 2020-23 Strategic Plan, which has been approved by The Executive Office ministers and extended by one year with the approval of officials to align with the review of the T:BUC strategy. The 2020-23 Strategic Plan builds on the Community Relations Council's role as a trusted and critical link between government and all sections of society, continuing to promote good practice in building peace and good relations. The organisation will draft its new Strategic Plan this year.
- The organisation will continue to take a co-ordinated approach to grant funding focused on T:BUC priorities and objectives. The organisation will continue to review the distribution of its grants and put in place any necessary mitigations to achieve the goals set out in its Strategic Plan 2020-24.
- The organisation will continue to emphasise an outcomes-based approach to delivery and use the revised good relations indicators as the basis of its performance monitoring framework.
- The organisation will continue to deliver a programme of engagement and shared learning. It will also contribute to the T:BUC architecture and thematic groups.
- The Community Relations Council will implement the '*Partnership Agreement*' with The Executive Office during 2023-24. The '*Partnership Agreement*' replaced the previous Management Statement/Financial Memorandum.
- The organisation will continue to operate agile working methods in a manner that is consistent with public sector guidance.
- The organisation will continue to develop its suite of key performance indicators and targets to enhance strategic decision making and better demonstrate the impact of the work undertaken by the Community Relations Council.

Employee and Board involvement

The Board of the Community Relations Council is responsible for establishing the overall strategic direction of the Community Relations Council. In doing so it will approve the triennial strategic plan, the annual business plan, corporate policies and provide assurance to The Executive Office that appropriate action is being taken on strategic, financial, legal and governance matters. Employees are responsible for implementing the Board's decisions,

including reporting and providing assurance to the Board on the Community Relations Council's performance in implementing the Board decisions. Staff involvement includes attendance at Board meetings, joint planning sessions with Board members, monthly staff meetings, the use of project teams and performance management tailored to support the achievement of strategic objectives.

Personal data related incidents

The Community Relations Council is required to report on personal data related incidents and accordingly have a control system to meet these responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The control system has been established to ensure the appropriate handling of personal data and information used for operational and reporting purposes through the development of appropriate strategy and policy.

There were no breaches of personal data during the year.

Freedom of Information

During 2022-23 year the Community Relations Council received two Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. All requests were responded to in a timely way and in a manner consistent with the Community Relations Council's publication scheme.

Pensions

The Community Relations Council participates in a defined benefit pension scheme administered by the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) for all permanent staff. Further details are set out in the Remuneration Report on pages 45 to 49 the accounting policies on pages 61 to 65 and commitments under Defined Benefit Pension Scheme in Note 16 on pages 76 to 80.

Reporting of Complaints

The Community Relations Council received no complaints during 2022-23.

The Community Relations Council's Complaints Policy can be accessed via the [website \(https://www.community-relations.org.uk/contact-us\)](https://www.community-relations.org.uk/contact-us).

Prompt Payment Policy

The Community Relations Council is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998. Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of the receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later. Regular reviews conducted during the year to measure how promptly the Community Relations Council paid its bills found that 95% (2021-22: 96%) of bills were paid within this standard. It was also noted that 82% (2021-22: 92%) of bills were paid within 10 days.

Related Parties

Details of the company's related parties are set out in note 17 to the Accounts.

Register of interests

The Chair, Board of Directors, Chief Executive and Senior Management Team are required to register all interests, direct or indirect, which members of the public might reasonably think could influence their judgment. The register of interests is available on the Community Relations Council website or for public inspection by contacting the Director of Finance, Administration and Personnel, Northern Ireland Community Relations Council, Equality House, 7-9 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast. BT2 7DP.

Corporate Governance

The Governance Statement is set out on pages 32 to 45.

Auditors

The Comptroller and Auditor General has the statutory responsibility for the audit of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013.

ii) Statement of Accounting Officer's and Directors' Responsibilities

Under the Companies Act 2006, the Directors are required to prepare for each financial year, a statement of accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for Charities. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Community Relations Council and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer and Directors are required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRoM) and in particular to:

- observe the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the FRoM have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the Accounts;
- prepare the Accounts on a going concern basis; and
- confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

The Accounting Officer of The Executive Office has appointed the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public

finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council's assets, are set out in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland.

As required by the Companies Act 2006, the Accounting Officer and Directors are also responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Accounting Officer and Directors have a general responsibility taking steps as are reasonably available to safeguard the assets of the company and to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Statement of disclosure of information to the auditors

The Accounting Officer and Directors confirm that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and the Accounting Officer takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

The Accounting Officer and Directors confirm that, for all directors in office at the date of this report:

- So far as the Accounting Officer and each director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware.
- The Accounting Officer and each director has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken in his/her duty as a director in order to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.
- The Trustees have complied with their duty in Section 11 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to guidance published by the Charity Commission.

iii) Governance Statement

1. Introduction

This statement is given in respect of the Community Relations Council for the year ended 31st March 2023. It outlines the Community Relations Council's governance framework for directing and controlling its functions and how assurance is provided to support me in my role as Accounting Officer for the Community Relations Council.

The Community Relations Council's governance structures are developed in line with Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI), Departmental and other requirements and guidance. The Board of the Community Relations Council has corporate responsibility for ensuring that the organisation fulfils the responsibilities, aims and objectives set by the Board and agreed with The Executive Office and Ministers including promoting the efficient, economic and effective use of staff and other resources. As Accounting Officer, I have a duty to satisfy myself that the Community Relations Council has adequate governance systems and

procedures in place to promote the effective, efficient conduct of its business and to safeguard financial propriety and regularity.

The Community Relations Council is an Arm's Length Body of The Executive Office and a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. It has been formally governed as an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) since April 2012.

The Community Relations Council operates in accordance with a Partnership Agreement with The Executive Office as laid out in NI Code of Good Practice. This sets out the relationship between the two organisations and defines the financial and administrative framework of the Community Relations Council. The Community Relations Council's primary source of income is grant-in-aid provided by its sponsoring Department, The Executive Office. The Partnership Agreement sets out the conditions on which grant-in-aid is paid and the related financial delegations of the Community Relations Council. The Partnership Agreement replaced the Management Statement Financial Memorandum previously approved by the Board and The Executive Office.

Within this overall framework, it is the role of the Community Relations Council to determine its policies and activities.

2. Compliance with Corporate Governance Code

The Community Relations Council applies the principles of the Department of Finance's *Corporate governance in central government departments: Code of good practice (2013)* where applicable and any other relevant guidance received from government as it continues to strengthen its governance arrangements.

At the 31st March 2023 the Community Relations Council is compliant with the Code.

3. Governance Framework

The Community Relations Council has developed key organisational structures and relationships which support the delivery of corporate governance and which are:

- The Executive Office Ministers;
- The Executive Office Departmental Accounting Officer;
- the Board;
- the Accounting Officer;
- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee;
- the Finance and General Purposes Committee;
- internal Audit function; and
- external Audit function (NIAO).

These key structures and relationships along with their responsibilities and performance are explained in detail in the relevant sections below.

4. Governance Responsibilities and Performance

Ministers

Relationships between the Community Relations Council and the Ministers are governed by the arm's length principle, wherein the primary role of Ministers is to set the Community Relations Council's strategic and financial framework including the structure of its funding and governance.

These responsibilities are discharged on a day-to-day basis on the Ministers' behalf and in their absence, by the Sponsoring Body. Within this framework, it is the role of this organisation to determine its policies and activities in keeping with the objectives of Government policy and guidance.

Board and Sub – Committees

Board members have individual and collective responsibility for ensuring that the Community Relations Council fulfils its functions in accordance with its remit and that its activities ensure value for money within a framework of best practice, regularity and propriety.

The Community Relations Council has capacity for 24 members and there was a total of nine members in post during the year. The Community Relations Council aims to meet every six weeks, holding at least six meetings during any 12-month period. A scheme of delegation is in place and day-to-day responsibility for provision of services rests with the Chief Executive, Jacqueline Irwin, supported by the Senior Management Team.

The Board supports the delivery of effective corporate governance and operates within best practice guidelines set out in the Department of Finance's Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice (2013). The Board takes an objective long-term view of the business of the Community Relations Council, leading its strategic planning process and assisting me as Accounting Officer in meeting the corporate governance responsibilities for the Community Relations Council.

In addition, the Memorandum and Articles of Association set out the Board's responsibility to establish and oversee corporate governance arrangements. Notwithstanding this, all tiers of management have commensurate responsibilities for ensuring that good governance practices are followed at an organisational/business level.

The key aspects of the Board's role include:

- setting the strategic direction for the Community Relations Council, including its vision, values and strategic objectives, and overseeing the implementation of the strategic and business plans, performance against its commitments to The Executive Office, and budget;

- developing, promoting and overseeing the implementation of policies and programmes in line with the Community Relations Council’s strategic direction;
- leading and overseeing the process of change and encouraging innovation, to enhance the Community Relations Council’s capability to deliver;
- monitoring performance via the Community Relations Council’s corporate plans, budgets and targets, and assessing and managing the strategic risk to delivery;
- overseeing the strategic management of the Community Relations Council’s staff, finance, information and physical resources, including setting training and health and safety priorities;
- establishing and overseeing the implementation of the Community Relations Council’s corporate governance arrangements, including risk management; and
- overseeing and monitoring progress against all of the Community Relations Council’s equality of opportunity, good relations and human rights obligations.

In line with best practice, the operational procedures of the Board are kept under continuous review. The Chair has reviewed the number of meetings of the Board and its committees as they relate to the completion of the business plan for the year. He has also reviewed attendance, chairing of committees and the findings of this year’s audit reports and is satisfied with performance for the year. During 2020/21 an Internal Audit report concluded that controls designed to mitigate risks associated with board effectiveness and corporate governance provided a satisfactory level of assurance.

During the year the Board received reports during each meeting on the delivery of business plan objectives; financial management and budget monitoring; HR and other resource priorities; and reports from the ARAC in relation to resilience of security and information assurance, contingency planning and business continuity planning.

The Board keeps under review the format and content of Board papers in line with good practice in relation to corporate governance and considers the information provided to be sufficient to allow it to discharge its strategic planning and corporate governance responsibilities.

The Board held eight meetings during 2022-23 in April, June, August, September, October, December, and two in February. The attendance at the meetings of directors in post at 31st March 2023 during the year is detailed in the table below:

Name	No of Meetings Attended	Total Possible Attendance
Mr. Martin McDonald (Chair)	8	8
Mr. Michael McDonnell	5	7
Ms. Claire Harris	5	8
Mr. John McCallister	8	8
Ms. Nisha Tandon	6	8
Ms. Audrey Simpson	6	8
Dr. Máire Braniff	4	7
Mr. Rory Campbell	7	8
Ms Sheila McClelland	5	8

Dr. Máire Braniff and Mr. Michael McDonnell volunteered to sit on the Core Funding Appeals Panel. This resulted in both Dr. Máire Braniff and Mr. Michael McDonnell being prevented from attending the Board meeting that considered applications for Core Funding. As a result, maximum possible attendance for these members was reduced to seven meetings.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The purpose of the ARAC is to support the Accounting Officer in monitoring risk, control and governance systems (including financial reporting) in the Community Relations Council. Additionally, the Committee advises me, as the Accounting Officer on the adequacy of internal and external audit arrangements to ensure adequate levels of assurance.

The Chair of the ARAC provides an update report at each board meeting. Typical issues that are reported by the Chair of the ARAC include risk management, fraud investigations, audit reports, update on implementation of audit recommendations and service continuity planning.

The ARAC met seven times during the financial year. Membership of the ARAC in 2022-23 comprised a Chairperson and two Members, all of whom are Board Members.

The members of the ARAC during 2022-23 and their attendance at the meetings during 2022-23 is detailed in the table below:

Name	No of Meetings Attended	Total Possible Attendance
Mr. John McCallister (Chairperson)	7	7
Mr. Michael McDonnell	6	7
Mr. Rory Campbell	7	7

Assessment of the ARAC was conducted by the Chair of the ARAC at the end of the 2022/23 financial year. The Chair noted that during that year the Committee reviewed the Risk Register at every meeting; received the NIAO Report to Those Charged with Governance; oversaw the implementation of a number of audit recommendations; received 'satisfactory' rated reports from the internal auditors on their review of 'IT and Continuity Planning', 'Grant Administration', and 'Finance and Complaints Handling'. The Chair of the ARAC concluded that he was satisfied with their performance.

During the financial year the ARAC considered and advised senior management on the key strategic risks, audit strategy and audit reports. The programme of work completed during the financial year included:

- review of the corporate risk register;
- scrutiny of the Annual Report and Accounts;
- consideration of internal audit strategy;
- consideration of NIAO audit strategy;
- review of internal and external audit findings;
- monitoring of residual audit recommendations;
- consideration of potential audit issues arising from grant awards.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee

The role of the Finance and General Purposes Committee is to advise the Board on operations, policies and strategies related to financial management, financial reporting, procurement, facilities, information technology, human resources, information governance, equality matters and other corporate services. The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee provides an update report at each board meeting on these issues.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee met three times during the financial year. Membership of the Committee in 2022-23 comprised a Chairperson and three Members, all of whom are Board Members.

The members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee during 2022-23 and their attendance at the meetings detailed in the table below:

Name	No of Meetings Attended	Total Possible Attendance
Mr. Martin McDonald (Chair)	3	3
Mr. Michael McDonnell	2	3
Ms. Nisha Tandon	3	3
Ms. Audrey Simpson	3	3

Assessment of the Finance and General Purposes Committee was conducted by the Chair of the Committee at the end of the financial year. The Chair noted that during the year, the Committee: reviewed CRC's performance against the Business Plan, quarterly; reviewed and approved a number of policies; and received and approved the 2021/22 Annual Report and Accounts. The Chair was satisfied with the performance of the Committee.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee considered and advised senior management on key financial and other operational matters. The programme of work completed during the financial year considered:

- 2022-23 Business Plan delivery
- Financial Management

- Vouching and Verification
- Procurement
- Pay and Reward
- Staff Engagement
- Equality and Disability Action Plan Updates
- Premises and Facilities Management, including Health and Safety.

Accounting Officer

In my role as Accounting Officer, I function with the support of the Board keeping them informed of specific business implications or risks and, where appropriate, the measures that could be employed to manage them.

As Accounting Officer, I have ensured the organisation's progress in implementing an appropriate and proportionate system of internal control in accordance with all Government guidance.

The Community Relations Council's Annual Report and Accounts are prepared in a form directed by The Executive Office with that form having been approved by the Department of Finance.

5. Quality of Data Provided to the Board

The Board is satisfied as to the quality of data and information provided which is always thoroughly reviewed. At present the Board receives standing information for each meeting on key areas such as delivery, performance, finance and human resources. Briefing papers on other material issues are provided as they arise. All papers are issued a week in advance of any Board meeting to allow members to review and, where appropriate, to raise questions in advance. The relevant business area attends Board meetings to support discussions or is asked to produce more detailed information in advance of the meeting. All statistical and financial information is provided by professionally qualified accountants. All reports/papers conform to a standard layout to ensure the appropriate focus on key issues. Financial and performance data is extracted from the accounting and operational systems and is therefore subject to regular, planned internal quality assurance checks and independent audits.

6. Board Effectiveness

Assessment of the Board and Board members was conducted by the Chair. Examples of the areas considered by the review include: attendance, contribution to strategic direction, adherence to the code of conduct, relationships and training. The Chair concluded that he was satisfied with Board performance. The Chair met with TEO on 7th June 2023 to provide an update on the work of the Community Relations Council and complete an appraisal of his performance as Chair.

7. Internal Control and Risk Management

The Community Relations Council has procedures in place to ensure that it identifies its strategic and operational risks and determines a control strategy. As Accounting Officer, I have overall responsibility for the Community Relations Council's corporate business and for ensuring the effective management of the associated risks. All relevant internal control considerations, including any issues of risk, are taken into account with regard to the achievement of the Community Relations Council's policies, aims and objectives, and where necessary, are brought to the attention of the sponsoring department, The Executive Office. An important element of the system of internal control is provision of assurance to The Executive Office by way of the Quarterly Assurance Statement. The Community Relation Council's internal control accords with best practice and applicable guidance.

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

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to:

- identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of policies, aims and objectives;
- evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised; and
- manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place in the Community Relations Council for the year ended March 2023 and up to the date of approval of the Annual Report and Accounts, and accords with Department of Finance guidance.

To assist in the risk management process, the consideration of risks is mapped out in the Community Relations Council's corporate Risk Register which is scrutinised and updated at each ARAC meeting and annually at the Board Meeting. The Register:

- identifies the Community Relations Council's risks; and
- analyses the risks related to the current Business Plan, including provision for the mitigation and control of risks.

All new business activities are assessed for key risks and controls are put in place.

During 2022-23 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reviewed the risk strategy and register. The risk strategy and register are aligned with the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) publication "Good Practice in Risk Management", with the key risks being reviewed by the management team in advance of being presented to and considered at each meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The Community Relations Council assessed the residual resource risk related to implementation of the Department of Finance Pay Remit guidance as red due to associated issues being uncertain and developing, and therefore implicating on the future financial resources available.

The table below summarises the key risks which have been assessed as red and amber residual risks and were reported at the last meeting of the ARAC during the 2022-23 financial year.

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Impact</i>	<i>Mitigations</i>
Resources - Financial	In developing a business case to implement Department of Finance Pay Remit guidance it has become apparent that employees' pension schemes and pension contributions is a complicated and dynamic area, and as such the financial implications have significant inherent uncertainty.	The Community Relations Council will continue to work with The Executive Office and Department of Finance to achieve full compliance with Department of Finance guidance.
Resources - Human Resource	This risk considers the impact of staffing issues within CRC.	CRC's temporary Finance Manager began full time on Wednesday 8 th March 2023. CRC received a resignation from the Director of Funding and Development at the end of March 2023.
Resource – Financial	This risk considers the impact of the increase in External Audit Fee	The Chair raised this matter with TEO. TEO is now investigating whether this is a widespread issue across ALBs. Since then, the Audit Office has written to CRC outlining the costs for 2022-23 audit
Resources – Human Resource	This risk considers the impact of recent correspondence relating to the NILGOSC Pension Scheme	CRC has received legal correspondence about the effects of changes made to pensions as a result of the enactment of the Public Service Pensions Act (NI) 2014. Legal advice has been taken. CRC's solicitors drafted a response to the correspondence. With the approval of the Chair, the submission was made to the Tribunal Service on Friday 25 th November. This letter has been shared with Board members.
Resource – Financial	This risk considers the impact CRC faces in terms of the 2023/24 budget from The Executive Office. Resource budget confirmation - £2,998k confirmed on 28 th September 2023. GIA (Grant-In-Aid – Cash) £3,033k confirmed on 27 th September 2023	TEO announced that the Department would likely face a 10%-15% cut to their budget. CRC have incurred a 10% cut to Resource & Cash budgets in 2023-24

There are also a number of other processes which contribute to the management of risks and corporate governance in the organisation:

- The Corporate and Business Planning Process:
The Community Relations Council's Strategic Plan was approved by Ministers in January 2021. The Strategic Plan is supported by annual Business Plans.
- The Performance Management System:
Performance is monitored throughout the year, reviewed annually by the Board and reported to The Executive Office quarterly during Accountability and Liaison Meetings.
- HR Policies:
HR policies are designed to ensure that the Community Relations Council has the appropriate numbers of staff with suitable skills to meet its objectives; a system is in place for managing attendance at work and levels of absence are reviewed regularly by the Board and reported to The Executive Office; independent HR guidance supports the organisation in ensuring that it operates in compliance with employment law.
- Budgets and Priorities Setting Including In-year Monitoring Processes:
Budgets & priorities setting are in place and reviewed quarterly in association with The Executive Office. Ongoing downward pressure on government budgets continues to be a risk for the Community Relations Council but this is reviewed regularly by the Board.
- The Community Relations Council's Fraud Policy and Response Plan, Incorporating Arrangements for Whistle Blowing:
The fraud policy and response plan details responsibilities regarding the prevention of fraud and the procedures to be followed in the event of a fraud being detected or suspected. The Annual Report highlights cases of suspected fraud or irregularity and how the Community Relations Council is responding to those claims. Note 18 on page 81 Financial Regularity provides further information.

No 'Raising Concerns' incidents occurred at CRC in 2022-23. Each was processed and reported as set out in the procedures. No fraud was detected in these cases, and they were closed down, in agreement with The Executive Office.

- Gifts and Hospitality:
In line with recommended practice, the Community Relations Council has arrangements in place for the management of gifts and hospitality and all are included on a Gifts and Hospitality Register.
- Third Party Organisations:
Related party transactions are reported in the Accounts.
- Service Continuity Plan:
The Community Relations Council reviewed and updated its Business Continuity Plan in March 2022. The Business Continuity Plan was tested in May 2022 and November 2022. An internal audit of CRC's Business Continuity Plan was conducted in February 2023. The review concluded that Continuity Planning was 'satisfactory' and no priority one or two recommendations were made.
- Management of Information Risks:

Safeguarding information and its subsequent effective use, is a key element supporting the Community Relations Council in the delivery of its objectives. Central to achieving this is the effective management of information risk. As part of an ongoing process to identify and control risks to information, the Community Relations Council takes assurance on its information arrangements and practices from all internal and external audits. During 2022-23 the Community Relations Council maintained and operated its Information Governance policies and procedures, including Data Protection, Information Security, Records Management and Document Retention.

Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors, the ARAC, which oversees the work of the internal auditor, the executive managers within the Community Relations Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their Report to Those Charged with Governance and other reports. The Board, and the ARAC have advised me on the implications of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and plans to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the control environment are in place.

8. Sources of Independent Assurance

Internal Audit

The Internal Audit function is independent of the organisation and is provided under contract by ASM. Internal Audit has no executive powers. It provides assurance by giving an independent and objective opinion, to the Accounting Officer and the ARAC, on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Community Relations Council's systems of internal control and risk management.

Internal Audit operates in accordance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). The primary role of Internal Audit is to provide the Accounting Officer and the Board with an independent and objective opinion on risk management, control and governance, by measuring and evaluating their effectiveness in achieving the agreed objectives.

Internal Audit has played a crucial role in the review of the effectiveness of risk management, controls and governance in the Community Relations Council by:

- focusing audit activity on the key business risks;
- being available to guide managers and staff through improvements in internal controls;
- auditing the application of risk management and control as part of Internal Audit reviews of key systems and processes; and
- providing advice to management on internal governance implications of proposed and emerging changes.

For the year to 31st March 2023, the internal auditors have conducted reviews in line with their Annual Audit Plan covering:

Function	Date of final report	Assurance rating
IT and Business Continuity Planning	14th March 2023	Satisfactory
Grants Administration and Distribution,	20th March 2023	Satisfactory
Finance and Complaints Handling	16th March 2023	Satisfactory

Internal Audit's Annual Assurance Statement issued an overall satisfactory rating with regard to the Community Relations Council's risk management, control and governance arrangements operating effectively and providing a satisfactory assurance in relation to the effective and efficient achievement of the Community Relations Council's objectives.

All audit recommendations are implemented on a timely basis and progress is reported during each meeting of the ARAC. Internal Audit completed a progress review of previous Internal Audit recommendations and found all recommendations have been implemented as agreed.

External Audit

The Community Relations Council is subject to independent scrutiny from its external auditor, the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO). NIAO is independent of the organisation and Government and is tasked by the Assembly to hold public bodies to account for their use of public money. The Comptroller and Auditor General works closely with the Assembly's Public Accounts Committee which can require Accounting Officers to account for their actions in relation to the management of public funds.

A representative from the NIAO is invited to attend all the meetings of the ARAC at which corporate governance and risk management matters are routinely considered.

The NIAO audits, certifies and reports on the Accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Northern Ireland Order 2013, along with selected disclosures as recommended in the 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice' applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard FRS 102 (effective 1 January 2019)' and the 2022-23 HM Treasury Financial Reporting Manual.

Data Losses

There were no data losses during the year.

Significant Issues

Current Department of Finance guidance FD (DFP) 09/18 sets out that a review should be conducted annually to ensure that staff salary maintains the principle of ‘no better off, no worse off’ as a result of their employees’ pension contributions. Presently the Community Relations Council increases the basic salaries for all but six employees (whose contracts began after the guidance was issued) by making an additional contribution of 6% on gross earnings to compensate employees for superannuation contributions payable to NILGOSC pension scheme. Of this cost to the Community Relations Council there is uncertainty concerning the regularity of a portion of this 6% totalling £15,302. This arrangement was originally put in place to ensure that employees were not disadvantaged as a result of what were historically higher contributions to the NILGOSC pension scheme compared to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) (NI).

During the 2019-20 financial year the Department of Finance wrote to The Executive Office stating that it is imperative that a business case for full implementation of Department of Finance Pay Remit guidance is prioritised and that options for a longer-term solution are considered before the submission of the 2018-19 Pay Remit to the Department of Finance. The Executive Office then met the Community Relations Council's Board to inform them that they wished to have received the CRC business case before the close of the 2019-20 financial year. The Board established a sub group to consider the issues, to develop a business case and identify a preferred option to resolve the issues. Following meetings of the sub group a business case with a recommended preferred option was submitted to The Executive Office in March 2020 and then updated on 8th July 2020 following The Executive Office review. Queries and comments were received from The Executive Office during December 2020 and reviewed by the sub group. The Chair met with The Executive Office Accounting Officer, in February 2021, and subsequently wrote to him on 24th February, to seek an agreed and safe way forward on all outstanding matters.

The Community Relations Council received notice in March 2022 of the approval of all outstanding Pay Remits. The 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, and 2021/22 Pay Remits were all processed and paid to all affected staff (current and previous) on 24th March 2022.

No further communication has been received from The Executive Office in relation to resolving the implementation of Department of Finance guidance FD (DFP) 09/18.

Significant Internal Control Problems

There were no significant internal control problems noted in the year to 31st March 2023.

9. Conclusion in relation to Risk Management Status

The Community Relations Council has a system of accountability on which I rely, as Accounting Officer, to form an opinion on the probity and use of public funds, as detailed in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland.

Having considered the accountability framework, and in conjunction with assurances given to me by the ARAC, I am satisfied that the controls in place to manage risks are appropriate and sound. Any significant internal control issues are reported to the ARAC, the Board and The Executive Office. These controls provide reasonable assurance that risks will not occur or if a risk does occur that it will be detected and corrected in sufficient time to reduce the impact of the risk to tolerable or negligible levels.

B) Remuneration and Staff Report

Remuneration Policy

The appointment and value of remuneration of the Chair is the responsibility of The Executive Office and is carried out in line with the OCPANI guidance on public appointments. The Chair's performance is reviewed by The Executive Office.

Appointment of senior staff is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. The remuneration of staff aligns with the Northern Ireland Civil Service pay scales and includes a pension allowance uplift for those employed prior to guidance from Department of Finance during 2013. The performance of the Chief Executive is reviewed by the Chair. The notice period for all senior staff members of the Community Relations Council does not exceed six months.

Appointment of all other staff is on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. The remuneration of staff aligns with the Northern Ireland Civil Service pay scales and includes a pension allowance uplift for those employed prior to guidance from the Department of Finance during 2013. Performance is appraised by line managers in respect of achievement of agreed objectives.

The arrangements for early termination of senior staff are made in accordance with the employment contract of the relevant individual. All current members took up their positions on 1st June 2019 and were appointed for three years. The Chair took up position on 1st June 2019 following appointment by The Executive Office. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation. During the year, no early termination payments were paid. In the absence of Ministers The Executive Office has extended the term of office of all members to June 2024.

The Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association of the Community Relations Council makes provision for the Chair and other members to be remunerated. In October 2017 the Community Relations Council received approval from the Charity Commission NI to remunerate the Board and the Chair. On 16th April 2019 the Board approved amendments to the Articles of Association to allow The Executive Office to make appointments to the Board.

Remuneration (including salary) and Pension Entitlements (audited)

The following directors, who were in post at 31st March 2023, and senior staff received emoluments directly from the Community Relations Council during the year.

	2022-23 Salary/ Fee	2022-23 Pension Benefits * to nearest	2022-23 Total	2021-22 Salary/ Fee	2021-22 Pension Benefits *	2021-22 Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
J Irwin CEO	70-75	36	105-115	75-80	36	110-115
M McDonald (Chairperson)	5 - 10	-	5 - 10	5 - 10	-	5 - 10
C Harris	0 - 5	-	0 - 5	0 - 5	-	0 - 5
J McCallister	0 - 5	-	0 - 5	0 - 5	-	0 - 5
N Tandon	0 - 5	-	0 - 5	0 - 5	-	0 - 5
A Simpson	0 - 5	-	0 - 5	0 - 5	-	0 - 5
M Braniff	0 - 5	-	0 - 5	0 - 5	-	0 - 5

**The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a transfer of pension rights. The figures presented are provided to the Community Relations Council on request by NILGOSC.*

Mr. M McDonnell, Mr. R Campbell and Ms. S McClelland did not claim an attendance allowance during the financial year.

Salary

Salaries consist of gross salary to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation and any ex-gratia payments.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by the HM Revenue & Customs as taxable emoluments.

Neither bonus nor benefits in kind were paid to the Chair, the Chief Executive or any other directors during either period. The Community Relations Council offers its employees gym membership up to the maximum value per annum of £200.

No Community Relations Council employee received a benefit in kind greater than £200 during the financial year.

Ratio of Median Remuneration to Highest Paid Director (audited)

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

	2022-23	2021-22
Band of Highest Paid Director's Total Remuneration (£)	72,500	77,500
75th Percentile Total Remuneration (£)	35,595	37,963
Median Total Remuneration (£)	31,753	32,733
25th Percentile Total Remuneration (£)	29,007	30,107
Ratio (75th percentile)	2.04	2.04
Ratio (midpoint)	2.28	2.37
Ratio (25th percentile)	2.50	2.57
Change of highest paid Director (%)	-6.18%	14.81%
Change of whole entity (%)	-6.45%	15.77%

The banded total remuneration of the highest-paid director in the Community Relations Council in the financial year 2022-23 was £70k-£75k (2021-22: £75k- £80k). The median remuneration of the workforce, for 2022-23 was £31,753 (2021-22 £32,733). Salaries for employees at the Community Relations Council range from £25k-£30k to £70k- £75k (2021-22: £25k-£30k to £75k-£80k).

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

Pension Benefits (audited)

	Accrued Pension at pension age as at 31/03/2023 & related lump sum £	Real increase (decrease) in pension & related lump sum £	CETV at 31/03/2023 £	CETV at 31/03/2022 £	Real increase in CETV £
J Irwin					
Chief Executive Officer	37,665	(1,411)	746	716	(30)

CRC are required to follow annual guidance on reporting requirements promulgated by HM Treasury through Public Expenditure System (PES) papers.

Compensation for loss of office (audited)

No members of staff received compensation for loss of office or exit packages during the year ended 31st March 2023.

Pensions

Introduction

The Community Relations Council participates in a defined benefit pension scheme administered by NILGOSC for all permanent staff. The employer makes a contribution of 19.5% (2021-22: 23%) of basic salary to the NILGOSC pension scheme. The employee does not have to join this scheme. Further details can be found on www.nilgosc.org.uk.

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the Scheme if they are at or over pension age. The NILGOSC pension age is 65.

The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is a funded defined benefit plan with benefits earned up to 31st March 2015 being linked to final salary. Benefits after 31st March 2015 are based on a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme. Details of the benefits earned over the period covered by this disclosure are set out in 'The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014' (as amended) and 'The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 (as amended)'.

Funding / Governance Arrangements of the LGPS

The funded nature of the LGPS requires participating employers and their employees to pay contributions into the Fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liabilities with investment assets. Information on the framework for calculating contributions to be paid is set out in the LGPS Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 and the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement. The last actuarial valuation was at 31st March 2019 and the contributions to be paid until 31st March 2023 resulting from that valuation are set out in the Fund's, Rates and Adjustments Certificate. The Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (The Committee) is responsible for the governance of the Fund.

Assets

The assets allocated to the Employer in the Fund are notional and are assumed to be invested in line with the investments of the Fund for the purposes of calculating the return over the accounting period. The Fund holds a significant proportion of its assets in liquid investments. As a consequence, there will be no significant restriction on realising assets if a large payment is required to be paid from the Fund in relation to an employer's liabilities. The assets are invested in a diversified spread of investments and the approximate split of assets for the Fund as a whole (based on data supplied by the Committee) is shown in the disclosures.

The Committee may invest a small proportion of the Fund's investments in the assets of some of the employers participating in the Fund if it forms part of their balanced investment strategy.

Asset Volatility

The liabilities used for accounting purposes are calculated using a discount rate set with reference to corporate bond yields at the accounting date. If assets underperform this yield this will create a deficit in the accounts. The Fund holds a significant proportion of growth assets which, while expected to outperform corporate bonds in the long term, creates volatility and risk in the short term in relation to the accounting figures.

Changes in Bond Yield

A decrease in corporate bond yields will increase the value placed on the liabilities for accounting purposes although this will be marginally offset by the increase in the assets as a result (to the extent the Fund invests in corporate bonds).

Inflation Risk

The majority of the pension liabilities are linked to either pay or price inflation. Higher inflation expectations will lead to a higher liability value. The assets are not perfectly correlated with inflation meaning that an increase in inflation will increase the deficit.

Life Expectancy

The majority of the Fund's obligations are to provide benefits for the life of the member following retirement, so increases in life expectancy will result in an increase in the liabilities.

Exiting Employers

Employers which leave the Fund (or their guarantor) may have to make an exit payment to meet any shortfall in assets against their pension liabilities. If the Employer (or guarantor) is not able to meet this exit payment the liability may in certain circumstances fall on other employers in the Fund. Further the assets at exit in respect of 'orphan liabilities' may, in retrospect, not be sufficient to meet the liabilities. This risk may fall on other employers. 'Orphan liabilities' are currently a small proportion of the overall liabilities in the Fund.

The Real Increase in the Value of the CETV

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

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

Staff Report

Analysis of Staff Costs

	Permanent Staff	Others	Board	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£	£	Total £	Total £
Wages and Salaries	538,272	70,410	12,843	621,525	610,528
Social security costs	57,185	-	-	57,185	66,673
Employers pension cost					
<u>Analysed as:</u>					
Current service cost	230,273	-	-	230,273	301,663
Total Staff Cost	825,730	70,410	12,843	908,983	978,864

Note: Subject to Audit

Average number of persons employed

The average number (subject to audit) of whole-time equivalent persons employed during the period was as follows:

	Permanent Staff	Others	Chair	2022-23	2021-22
				Total	Total
Total	17	-	1	18	17

On a headcount basis there were 16 (2021-22 17) full time members of staff employed during the period (15 at year end). One (2021-22: 1) member of staff was employed part time. On average two members of staff was engaged via a recruitment agency (2021-22: 0).

Note: Subject to Audit

Sickness Absence Data

The total number of working days lost through sickness during the period by the Community Relations Council staff was 124 days. This represented 2.9% of available working days for the Community Relations Council employees, of which 2.5% was due to long-term sickness absence. Sickness absence during the previous financial year was 164 days, representing 3.9% of available working days.

Staff Composition

At the end of the financial year the gender split amongst Board Members and employees was as follows:

	Male No.	Female No.
Council Members	4	5
Employees:		
Grade 6	-	1
DP	2	1
SO	2	2
EO	2	4
AO	1	1
	-----	-----
Total	7	9
	-----	-----

An analysis of staff costs for 2022-23 (£908,983) (2021-22: £978,864) is provided in Note 3 on page 66 and 67.

Staff Turnover

At the end of this financial year, Community Relations Council had 6.3% full-time permanent vacancy.

Consultancy

The Community Relations Council did not incur expenditure related to consultancy during the 2022-23 financial year.

Employees Matters

The Community Relations Council provides equal opportunities to its employees and are committed to the principle of equality for all Section 75 groups. This includes only having regard to the aptitudes and abilities of persons and in doing so apply employment policies that are fair, equitable and consistent with the needs of the business. The Community Relations Council's equal opportunities policy aim is to ensure no job applicant, employee or worker is discriminated against either directly or indirectly. The recruitment and selection of staff for the Community Relations Council is designed to ensure that applicants are treated in a fair and consistent manner, that the best person is appointed and to provide a reasonable adjustment for suitable persons whenever requested.

The Community Relations Council have appropriate internal arrangements in place to ensure that disability duties are complied with and effectively implemented. The Community Relations Council reviews its policies, procedures and practices to identify any amendments or actions needed to meet its disability duties on a regular basis. During the year the Community Relations Council has applied its Disability Action Plan.

There were no significant Health and Safety issues during the year that were directly related to the operations of the Community Relations Council and all minor issues are recorded and are available for inspection. The Community Relations Council operated its business continuity

arrangements throughout the year to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on the health and safety of its employees. During the year a Fire Risk Assessment was completed for Equality House Equality House. All fire equipment was serviced and replaced where necessary.

The Community Relations Council operate a performance management system intended to align employee activities to its objectives. The process identifies training requirements and career development opportunities to meet both the Community Relations Council's and the employee's needs.

All employees have the option to join a Trade Union. The Community Relations Council currently operate a procedural agreement with Unite the Union.

Off-Payroll Engagements

The Community Relations Council had no off-payroll engagements during the 2022-23 financial year (2021-22: £nil).



.....
J Irwin – Accounting Officer

14th November 2023

.....
Date



C Assembly Accountability and Audit Report

Overview

Regularity of Expenditure (audited)

The Community Relations Council ensures the regularity of its expenditure by application of the requirements contained within Managing Public Money Northern Ireland and its Management Statement.

As described on page 45, the Community Relations Council is working with The Executive Office and the Department of Finance to resolve uncertainty concerning the regularity of an additional contribution of 6% on gross earnings for employee’s superannuation contributions payable to the NILGOSC pension scheme totalling £15,302.

Fees and Charges (audited)

The Community Relations Council did not earn an income through fees or charges during the 2022-23 financial year.

Remote Contingent Liabilities (audited)

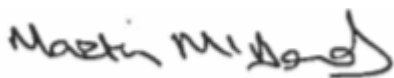
No remote contingent liabilities are known to have existed at the 31st March 2023.

Losses and Special Payments (audited)

	2022-23	2021-22
Total Number of Losses	-	-
Value of Losses	£-	£-

There were no losses or special payments made during the year.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors.



.....
M McDonald – Chairperson

14th November 2023

.....
Date



.....
J Irwin – Accounting Officer

14th November 2023

.....
Dat

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

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

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council for the year ended 31 March 2023 under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013. The financial statements comprise: the Statement of Financial Activities; Balance Sheet; Statement of Cash Flows; and the related notes, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

I have also audited the information in the Directors' Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Opinion on regularity

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

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of this certificate.

My staff and I are independent of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinions.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual, which require entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer and Directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements, the parts of the Directors' report described in that report as having been audited, and my audit certificate and report. The Accounting Officer and Directors are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Directors' Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual; and
- the information given in the Strategic Report and Directors' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Strategic Report and Directors' Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic Report and Directors' Report. I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Directors' Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by the Government Financial Reporting Manual are not made; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with the Department of Finance's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer and Directors for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's and Directors' Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer and Directors are responsible for:

- preparing the Annual Report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with the Companies Act 2006;
- the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view;
- such internal controls as management determines are necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
- assessing the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council will not be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulation, including fraud.

My procedures included:

- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council through discussion with management and application of extensive public sector accountability knowledge. The key laws and regulations I considered included governing legislation and any other relevant laws and regulations;
- making enquires of management and those charged with governance on the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council's compliance with laws and regulations;
- making enquiries of internal audit, management and those charged with governance as to the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council's susceptibility to irregularity and fraud, their assessment of the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and irregularity, and their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud and irregularity;
- completing risk assessment procedures to assess the susceptibility of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. This included, but was not limited to, an engagement director led engagement team discussion on fraud to identify particular areas, transaction streams and business practices that may be susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the posting of unusual journals;
- engagement director oversight to ensure the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with the applicable legal and regulatory framework throughout the audit;
- documenting and evaluating the design and implementation of internal controls in place to mitigate risk of material misstatement due to fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- designing audit procedures to address specific laws and regulations which the engagement team considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements in terms of misstatement and irregularity, including fraud. These audit procedures included, but were not limited to, reading board and committee minutes, and agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation and approvals as appropriate, testing of journal entries and reviewing internal audit reports; and
- addressing the risk of fraud as a result of management override of controls by:
 - performing analytical procedures to identify unusual or unexpected relationships or movements;
 - testing journal entries to identify potential anomalies, and inappropriate or unauthorised adjustments;
 - assessing whether judgements and other assumptions made in determining accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

- investigating significant or unusual transactions made outside of the normal course of business.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

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

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.



Dorinnia Carville
Comptroller and Auditor General
Northern Ireland Audit Office
106 University Street
BELFAST
BT7 1EU

22nd November 2023

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Statement of Financial Activities (Including Income & Expenditure Account) for Year Ended 31 March 2023

	Note	All Restricted and Unrestricted Funds 2022-23 £	All Restricted and Unrestricted Funds 2021-22 £
Income and endowments from:			
Donations and Legacies	2	3,268,494	3,224,987
Secondments		42,505	14,874
Total		3,310,999	3,239,861
Expenditure on:			
Charitable activities	4	3,579,963	3,602,728
Net income/(expenditure) before tax for the reporting period		(268,964)	(362,867)
Other recognised gains/(losses):			
Actuarial gain /(loss) on defined benefit pension scheme	16	2,769,000	1,069,000
Net movement in funds		2,500,036	706,133
Reconciliation of funds:			
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April		(2,866,485)	(3,572,618)
Net movement in funds		2,500,036	706,133
Fund balances carried forward at 31st March	14	(366,449)	(2,866,485)

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing, and all recognised gains and losses have been included in the results for the year as set out above.

The notes on pages 61 to 81 form part of these Accounts

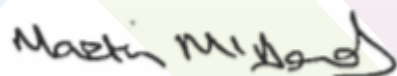
The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2023

	Note	2022-23 £	2021-22 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	7	185,252	21,664
Intangible fixed assets	8	7,688	14,496
		-----	-----
		192,940	36,160
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	9	8,086	32,214
Cash at bank and in hand	10	101,136	115,529
		-----	-----
		109,222	147,743
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(695,454)	(664,388)
Finance Leases	11	(49,594)	-
		-----	-----
Net current assets or (liabilities)		(635,826)	(516,645)
Total assets less current liabilities			
		(442,886)	(480,485)
Non - Current Liabilities - Finance Leases	11	(117,563)	-
Defined benefit pension asset/(liability)	16	194,000	(2,386,000)
		-----	-----
Total net liabilities		(366,449)	(2,866,485)
The funds of the charity			
Restricted Income Funds	14	(560,449)	(480,485)
Restricted Pension Reserve	14	194,000	(2,386,000)
		-----	-----
Total charity funds		(366,449)	(2,866,485)
		=====	=====

In the view of the Board an exemption from the audit requirements of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 is available under section 482 of that Act, since the company meets the Department of Finance's definition of a non-profit making company and is subject to a public sector audit under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Northern Ireland Order 2013, being an order issued under Article 5(3) of the Audit and Accountability (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. The Council therefore claims this exemption.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 14th November 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
M McDonald – Chairperson



.....
J Irwin – Accounting Officer

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

The notes on pages 61 to 81 form part of these Accounts

Cash Flow Statement for Year Ended 31st March 2023

		2022-23	2021-22
	Note	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash (used in) / provided by operating activities	12	9,929	89,561
		-----	-----
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	7	(4,464)	(5,042)
Purchase of intangible fixed assets	8	-	(1,500)
		-----	-----
Net cash (used in) investing activities		(4,464)	(6,542)
		-----	-----
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(14,393)	83,020
Opening cash and cash equivalents at 1st April	10	115,529	32,509
		-----	-----
Closing cash and cash equivalents at 31st March	10	101,136	115,529
		=====	=====

The notes on pages 61 to 81 form part of these Accounts

Notes to the Accounts for Year Ended 31st March 2023

1. Accounting policies

These Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act 2006, along with selected disclosures as recommended in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) (FRS 102). The particular policies adopted by the Community Relations Council for the year ended 31st March 2023 are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

The principal accounting policies are as follows:

Accounting convention

The Accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention. The directors do not consider the current costs of any of the year's transactions or closing balances to be materially different from the historical cost. The financial statements are presented in sterling, rounded to the nearest pound.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Basis of accounting

Grant Income is recognised in accordance with the performance model set out in FRS 102. Expenditure is treated on the accruals basis of accounting. Without limiting the information given, as the Community Relations Council is a charity that is a public benefit entity, the Accounts are prepared to meet the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP (FRS 102), Accounting Standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board and accounting and disclosure requirements issued by the Department of Finance. Income from grants, including Grant in Aid, is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable, and the amount can be measured reliably.

Going Concern

In June 2023 The Executive Office wrote to the Community Relations Council confirming that funding had been secured for the 2023-24 financial year. The Board is satisfied that the Community Relations Council is a going concern on the basis that it has a reasonable expectation that the Community Relations Council will continue to operate for the foreseeable future. In January 2021 the Community Relations Council received Ministerial approval for the 2020-24 Strategic Plan from The Executive Office. The 2023-24 business plan has been drafted and is with The Executive Office officials pending Ministerial approval. The financial statements are therefore prepared on the going concern basis.

Income

Income comprises all funding provided to the company for its own purposes. Grant income is recognised as follows:

- A grant that does not impose specified future performance-related conditions on the recipient is recognised in income when the grant proceeds are received or receivable.
- A grant that imposes specified future performance-related conditions on the recipient is recognised in income only when the performance-related conditions are met.
- Grants received before the revenue recognition criteria are satisfied are recognised as a liability.

Taxation

The Company is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from Income and Capital taxes, but not Value Added Tax (VAT).

The majority of the Community Relations Council incoming resources is through grant funding which is outside the scope of VAT. Accordingly the Community Relations Council is not VAT registered and amounts in these accounts are inclusive of VAT where charged.

Provisions

The Company makes provisions for liabilities and charges where, at the balance sheet date, a legal or constructive liability exists (i.e. a present obligation from past events exists), where the transfer of economic benefits is probable, and a reasonable estimate can be made.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Where the time value of money is material, the Community Relations Council discounts the provision to its present value using a standard Government discount rate.

Fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated on the balance sheet at cost and depreciated in order to write off the original cost of the assets over their expected useful lives on a straight-line basis over the following number of years:

Fixtures and fittings	5 years
Computer equipment	5 years

Indexation is not applied due to the short life nature of these assets i.e. less than 5 years. The minimum level of capitalisation of tangible fixed assets is £500.

Intangible fixed assets

Software licences for internal recording and reporting systems and other software such as the Grants Management System are capitalised as intangible assets. All intangible assets are amortised over their useful life i.e. 5 years, or the length of the licence. Indexation is not applied due to the short life nature of these assets i.e. less than 5 years. The minimum level of capitalisation of an intangible asset is £500.

Debtors

Debtors are measured on initial recognition at the amount receivable and subsequently at the cash amount expected to be received.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is cash in hand and deposits with any financial institution repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are investments that mature within 3 months or less from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

Creditors

Creditors are measured on initial recognition at the amount payable and subsequently at the cash amount expected to be paid.

Grants payable

Grant expenditure is recorded in the period in which the recipient carries out the activity which created the entitlement. Unpaid and unclaimed grants may represent obligations to be recognised as liabilities where there is evidence of entitlement. Where the amount of the claim is not known at the Balance Sheet date, an estimate will be made. Overpayments of grants are shown as receivables at the Balance Sheet date.

Financial Instruments

The Council has limited powers to borrow or invest surplus funds and financial assets and liabilities are generated by day-to-day operational activities rather than being held to change the risks facing the Council in undertaking activities. Therefore, the Council is exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Currency risk: The Company is principally a domestic organisation with the great majority of transactions, assets and liabilities being in the UK and Sterling based. The Company has no overseas operations. The Company therefore has low exposure to currency rate fluctuations.

Interest rate risk: The Company has limited powers to borrow or invest and therefore has low exposure to interest rate fluctuations.

Credit risk: Because the Company's income comprises all funding provided to it for its own purposes, the Company has low exposure to credit risk.

Liquidity risk: Since the Company receives the majority of its funding from The Executive Office, it is therefore not exposed to significant liquidity risks.

Employee Benefits

Staff costs must be recorded as an expense as soon as an organisation is obliged to pay them. This includes the cost of any untaken leave at the year end. This cost has been calculated using the untaken leave per staff member and applying this to their annual salary to calculate the leave balance as at 31st March 2023.

Redundancy and termination benefits

The exit costs associated with Voluntary Exit packages as funded by the Public Sector Transformation Fund, a facility provided through the 2014 Stormont House Agreement, are accounted for in full in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year departure is agreed.

Pension

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) Scheme.

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries using the market led approach. The latest actuarial valuations of the scheme were at 31st March 2019.

Pension scheme assets are measured using market value. Pension scheme liabilities are measured using the projected unit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term to the liability.

The increase in the present value of the liabilities of the Community Relations Council's defined benefit pension scheme arising from employee service in the period is charged to the SOFA so as to recognise the cost of pensions over the employees' working lives.

The Community Relations Council is no longer required to recognise an expected return on assets item in the SOFA. This is now replaced with a net financing charge which is based on the discount rate assumption.

Actuarial gains and losses are recognised in the SOFA.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Expenditure

Support costs include all expenditure directly relating to the objectives of the company.

Administration and Management costs, detailed on page 68 comprises the costs involved in complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any other costs which cannot be treated as direct charitable expenditure.

Costs incurred for meetings, seminars and other specific expenditure relating to the individual programmes are classified as programme costs, detailed on page 84.

Funds

The company has two types of funds for which it is responsible, and which require separate disclosure. These are as follows:

Restricted funds

Grant in aid received which is earmarked by the funder for specific purposes and within the overall aims of the company.

Pension Fund

The Charities SORP (FRS 102) requires the valuation of the net defined benefit liability to be included within the accounts.

Changes in Accounting Policy and Disclosure

Management has reviewed new accounting standards, the outcome being the adoption of in these accounts.

Charities SORP (FRS 102) Charitable Activities

Expenditure on charitable activities is reported as a functional analysis of the work undertaken by the Community Relations Council in note 5 on pages 69. The key activities of the Community Relations Council being grant making, policy, communication, cultural diversity, district council development and production of the Peace Monitoring Report. Under these headings are included grants payable and costs of activities performed directly by the charity, together with associated support costs.

Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute directly to more than one activity are apportioned between those activities on a per capita basis. Support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are also apportioned between the activities being supported on a per capita basis.

Leases

IFRS 16 Leases replaced IAS 17 Leases and is effective with EU adoption from 1 January 2019. In line with the requirements of FReM, IFRS 16 has implemented, as interpreted and adapted for the public sector, with effect from 1st April 2022. The interest element of any lease classified as a finance lease payment is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure over the period of the lease at a constant rate in relation to the balance outstanding.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

2. Income from donations and legacies and charitable activities

	Restricted Funds 2022-23 £	Total Funds 2022-23 £	Total Funds 2021-22 £
<u>Donations and legacies</u>			
Grant in Aid from The Executive Office	3,268,494	3,268,494	3,224,987
	----- 3,268,494 -----	----- 3,268,494 -----	----- 3,224,987 -----

3. Analysis of Staff Costs

	Permanent Staff £	Others £	Board £	2022-23 Total £	2021-22 Total £
Wages and Salaries	538,272	70,410	12,843	621,525	610,528
Social security costs	57,185	-	-	57,185	66,673
Employers pension cost					
<u>Analysed as:</u>					
Current service cost	230,273	-	-	230,273	301,663
Total Staff Cost	----- 825,730 -----	----- 70,410 -----	----- 12,843 -----	----- 908,983 -----	----- 978,864 -----

The difference between the current service cost in the staff costs note (subject to audit) and the amount included in the pension scheme note (note 16) is due to the difference between the estimated employer pension contributions notified to the actuary for valuation purposes and the actual amount incurred.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Average number of persons employed

The average number (subject to audit) of whole-time equivalent persons employed during the period was as follows:

	Permanent Staff	Others	Chair	2022-23 Total	2021-22 Total
Total	17	-	1	18	17

On a headcount basis there were 16 (2021-22 17) full time members of staff employed during the period (15 at year end). One (2021-22: 1) member of staff was employed part time. On average two members of staff was engaged via a recruitment agency (2021-22: 0).

Exit Packages						
Exit Package Cost Band	Number of compulsory redundancies	Number of other departures agreed	Total number of exit packages by cost band	Number of compulsory redundancies	Number of other departures agreed	Total number of exit packages by cost band
	2022-23	2022-23	2021-22	2021-22	2021-22	2021-22
£0-25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£25,001-50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£50,001- 100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£100,001-150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£150,000+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total number of exit packages by type	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total resource cost/ £	-	-	-	-	-	-
Actuarial Movement in Pension Net Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-

Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, a statutory scheme made under the Superannuation Act 1972. The table above shows the total cost of exit packages agreed and accounted for in 2022-3 (2021-22: £0). £0 exit costs were paid in 2022-23 (2021-22: 0). No persons retired early on ill-health grounds in 2022-23 (2021-22: None)

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Remuneration of key management

As reported in the Remuneration Report on pages 45 to 49, one member of staff received a salary within the band £70k - £75k.

4. Analysis of Expenditure on Charitable Activities

Key Activities	Activities Undertaken Directly	Grant Funding Activities	Support Cost	Total 2022-23
	£	£	£	£
Funding and Development	286,774	2,323,278	329,015	2,939,067
Community Engagement	311,881	-	329,015	640,896
Total	598,655	2,323,278	658,030	3,579,963

Key Activities	Activities Undertaken Directly	Grant Funding Activities	Support Cost	Total 2021-22
	£	£	£	£
Funding and Development	332,240	2,251,975	423,321	3,007,536
Community Engagement	284,024	-	311,168	595,192
Total	616,264	2,251,975	734,489	3,602,728

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Analysis of Support Costs

2022-23 Support Costs	Funding and Development £	Community Engagement £	Basis of Allocation
Facilities	43,597	43,597	Per Capita
HR	41,054	41,054	Per Capita
IT	57,849	57,849	Per Capita
Finance	52,332	52,332	Per Capita
Governance	134,183	134,183	Per Capita
	-----	-----	
Function Total	329,015	329,015	
	-----	-----	

2021-22 Support Costs	Funding and Development £	Community Engagement £	Basis of Allocation
Facilities	25,941	19,424	Per Capita
HR	60,187	44,632	Per Capita
IT	75,614	58,166	Per Capita
Finance	92,769	61,846	Per Capita
Governance	168,810	127,101	Per Capita
	-----	-----	
Function Total	423,321	311,169	
	-----	-----	

The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) performs the annual statutory audit of the Community Relations Council at a cost of £24,900 (2021-22: £23,000). There was a fee of £1,319 paid to National Fraud Initiative at the 31st March 2023 (2021-22: £Nil). This is included in the Governance costs above.

Staff travelling and subsistence costs totalled £2,675 in 2022-23 (2021-22: £45) This is included in the Governance costs above.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

5. Grant expenditure

	Grants payable £	Support costs £	2022-23 Total £
Grants schemes			
Small grants schemes	199,590	127,219	326,809
Publications and Media	47,869	9,870	57,739
Core Funding	1,348,781	150,799	1,499,580
Pathfinder	141,371	2,742	144,113
North Belfast Strategic Fund	585,667	38,385	624,052
	----- 2,323,278 -----	----- 329,015 -----	----- 2,652,293 -----
	Grants payable £	Support costs £	2021-22 Total £
Grants schemes			
Small Grants Scheme	688,558	163,684	852,242
Publications and Media	9,900	12,700	22,600
Core Funding	1,188,301	194,022	1,382,323
Pathfinder	29,290	3,528	32,818
North Belfast Strategic Fund	335,927	49,387	385,314
	----- 2,251,976 -----	----- 423,321 -----	----- 2,675,297 -----

A statement of grant making policies in the Directors' Report provides further information on these grant schemes. Of the grants that have been paid, none of the grants have been made to individuals (2021-22: None).

6. Statement of Net (Expenditure)/Income by Operating Segment:

IFRS 8 "Operating Segments" requires disclosure of financial information about an organisation's reportable segments based on the internal reporting arrangements as reviewed by the "Chief Operating Decision Maker" (CODM). The CODM for the Council is deemed to be the Council Members since they have the authority for directing the main activities of the Council throughout the year. The Council approves the annual budget and, at each Council meeting, reviews management accounts and corresponding segmental financial information.

The Board considers financial information that supports delivery of the Community Relations Council's T:BUC objectives as a whole rather than discrete financial information for each internal function. On this basis the Community Relations Council does not have the basis for segmental reporting.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

7. Tangible fixed assets Year End 31st March 2023

	Computer Equipment £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Buildings Right of Use £	Total £
Cost:				
Balance at 1st April 2022	58,672	71,232	-	129,904
Additions	3,562	902		4,464
IFRS16 Opening Balance Adjustment	-	-	216,253	216,253
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2023	62,234	72,134	216,253	350,621
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Accumulated depreciation:				
Balance at 1st April 2022	42,654	65,586	-	108,240
Charge for year	5,375	1,849	49,905	57,129
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2023	48,029	67,435	49,905	165,369
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Net book value:				
At 31st March 2023	14,205	4,699	166,348	185,252
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
At 1st April 2022	16,018	5,646	-	21,664
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Asset Financing				
Owned	14,205	4,699	-	18,904
Finance Lease			166,348	166,348
Net Book Value at 31st March 2023	14,205	4,699	166,348	185,252
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

Year End 31st March 2022

	Computer Equipment £	Fixtures and Fittings £	Buildings Right of use £	Total £
Cost:				
Balance at 1st April 2021	57,544	67,318	-	124,862
Additions	1,128	3,914	-	5,042
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2022	58,672	71,232	-	129,904
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Accumulated depreciation:				
Balance at 1st April 2021	37,258	63,161	-	100,419
Charge for year	5,396	2,425	-	7,821
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2022	42,654	65,586	-	108,240
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Net book value:				
At 31st March 2022	16,018	5,646	-	21,664
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
At 1st April 2021	20,286	4,157	-	24,443
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

8. Intangible fixed assets

Year End 31st March 2023	Software Licences	Total
	£	£
Cost:		
Balance at 1st April 2022	34,664	34,664
Additions	-	-
	-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2023	34,664	34,664
	-----	-----
Accumulated amortisation:		
Balance at 1st April 2022	20,168	20,168
Charge for year	6,808	6,808
	-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2023	26,976	26,976
	-----	-----
Net book value:		
At 31st March 2023	7,688	7,688
	=====	=====
At 1st April 2022	14,496	14,496
	=====	=====
 Year End 31st March 2022		
	Software Licences	Total
	£	£
Cost:		
Balance at 1st April 2021	33,164	33,164
Additions	1,500	1,500
	-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2022	34,664	34,664
	-----	-----
Accumulated amortisation:		
Balance at 1st April 2021	13,235	13,235
Charge for year	6,933	6,933
	-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2022	20,168	20,168
	-----	-----
Net book value:		
At 31st March 2022	14,496	14,496
	=====	=====
At 1st April 2021	19,929	19,929
	=====	=====

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

9. Debtors: amounts due in less than one year	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Grant claw backs	-	6,898
Prepayments	8,086	25,316
	-----	-----
	<u>8,086</u>	<u>32,214</u>

10. Cash and cash equivalents	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Balance at 1st April	115,529	32,509
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	(14,393)	83,020
	-----	-----
Balance at 31st March	<u>101,136</u>	<u>115,529</u>

Cash and cash equivalents are comprised entirely of cash on hand and are held in commercial banks. The Community Relations Council does not have any demand deposits or any short-term, highly liquid investments.

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Grants payable	563,338	519,037
Other creditors	11,168	46,154
Accruals	91,598	79,197
	-----	-----
	<u>666,104</u>	<u>644,388</u>

Creditors: Finance Leases

	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year	49,594	-
Amounts falling due after one year	117,563	-
	-----	-----
	<u>167,157</u>	<u>-</u>

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Deferred Income	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Amount deferred in year	29,350	20,000
	-----	-----
	29,350	20,000
	=====	=====
Opening Balance - £20,000		
Receipts - £24,000		
Payments - <u>£(14,650)</u>		
Closing Balance - £29,350		

12. Notes to the cash flow statement		2022-23	2021-22
		£	£
Net incoming resources	Note	(268,964)	(362,868)
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation/amortisation charge	7&8	63,937	14,754
Decrease in debtors	9	24,128	1,832
Increase in creditors	11	31,066	193,843
Building Rent Payment	15	(50,855)	-
Interest Charge		1,759	-
Current and past service cost	16	230,000	286,000
Less: Employer pension contributions	16	(104,000)	(111,000)
Interest on net defined benefit liability	16	63,000	67,000
		-----	-----
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities		(9,929)	89,561
		=====	=====

13. Net income is stated after charging	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	7,224	7,821
Amortisation of intangible fixed assets	6,808	6,933
Auditors' remuneration	24,900	23,000
National Fraud Initiative fee	1,319	-
	=====	=====

The cost incurred in respect of Statutory Audit fees during the year ended 31st March 2023 was £24,900 (2021-22: £23,000).

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

14. Fund balances - Outline summary of fund movements

Fund name	Fund balances brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains and Losses £	Fund Balance Carried forward £
Restricted Fund	(480,485)	3,310,999	(3,390,963)	-	(560,449)
Pension Reserve	(2,386,000)	-	(189,000)	2,769,000	194,000
Total Funds	<u>(2,866,485)</u>	<u>3,310,999</u>	<u>(3,579,963)</u>	<u>2,769,000</u>	<u>(366,449)</u>

Any funds above must be spent on direct charitable expenditure and associated administration and overhead costs.

With effect from 1st April 2021, The Executive Office has put in place a guarantee in respect of the pension liabilities of the Community Relations Council.

15.1 Quantitative disclosures around right-of-use assets

	Buildings £	Total 2022/23 £
Right-of-use assets		
IFRS16 Op. Balance Adj.	216,253	216,253
Depreciation expense	(49,905)	(49,905)
At 31st March 2023	166,348	166,348

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

15.2 Quantitative disclosures around lease liabilities

2022/23

£

Obligations under finance leases for the following periods comprise:

Buildings

Later than one year and not later than five
years

50,885

Less than five years

118,732

Less Interest element

(2,460)

Present Value of obligations

167,157

Other

Current portion

49,594

Non-current portion

117,563

15.3 Quantitative disclosures around cash outflow for leases

£

2022/23

Total cash outflow for leases

50,855

The Community Relations Council signed a Memorandum of Temporary Occupation (MOTO) agreement for premises at Equality House on the 1st April 2016. The MOTO expired on 31st July 2021 and has been further extended to 31st July 2026 subject to review. The commitments of IFRS 16 Leases under this MOTO is noted.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

16. Commitments under Defined Benefit Pension Scheme

The assets of the pension scheme are held separately from those of the Community Relations Council and are administered by NILGOSC. The pension cost is determined on the advice of independent qualified actuaries. The latest actuarial valuation of the Community Relations Council's liabilities took place at 31st March 2019.

The scheme is funded and the employer contributions were 19.5% for the year ended 31st March 2023 (2021-22: 19.5%). From 1st April 2022 employer contributions remain at 19.5% of pensionable pay and the employer expects to pay regular contributions to the Fund for the accounting period ended 31st March 2023 totalling £104,000 (31st March 2022: £111,000). The employees' contributions vary between 6.5% and 8.5% of pensionable pay. As required by The Charities SORP (FRS 102), the defined benefit liabilities have been measured using the projected unit credit method. The tables below state the actuarial assumptions upon which the valuation of the scheme was based.

Key Assumptions	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21
Discount rate	4.7%	2.7%	2.1%
CPI Inflation	2.7%	3%	3%
Pension increases	2.7%	3%	3%
Pension accounts revaluation rate	2.7%	3%	3%
Salary increases	4.2%	4.5%	4%
Asset Allocation		2022-23	2021-22
		%	%
Equities		41.3%	40.6%
Property		10.5%	10.9%
Government bonds		20.5%	24.1%
Multi Asset Credit		13.1%	12.9%
Corporate bonds		2.7%	1.8%
Cash		5.9%	6.2%
Other		6.0%	3.5%
Total		----- 100% -----	----- 100% -----

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Mortality Assumptions

The mortality assumptions are based on the recent actual mortality experience of members within the Fund and allow for expected future mortality improvements. Sample life expectancies at age 65 resulting from these mortality assumptions are shown below

	2022-23	2021-22
	Years	Years
Males		
Member aged 65 at accounting date	22.2	21.8
Member aged 45 at accounting date	23.2	23.2
Females		
Member aged 65 at accounting date	25.0	25.0
Member aged 45 at accounting date	26.0	26.4

Reconciliation of funded status to Balance Sheet

	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Fair value of assets	8,026,000	8,660,000
Present value of funded defined benefit obligation	(7,832,000)	(11,046,000)
Funded status	194,000	(2,386,000)
Unrecognised asset	-	-
Asset/(liability) recognised on the balance sheet	194,000	(2,386,000)

Amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities

	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Operating Cost		
Current service cost	230,000	286,000
Financing Cost		
Interest on net defined benefit liability	63,000	67,000
Pension expense recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities	293,000	353,000

Amounts recognised in other comprehensive income

Assets gains/(losses) arising during the period	(841,000)	161,000
Actuarial gains/(losses) due to changes in financial assumptions	4,515,000	-
Actuarial gains/(losses) due to changes in demographic assumptions	(32,000)	-
Actuarial gains/(losses) due to liability experience	(873,000)	-
Adjustment in respect of paragraph 28.22	-	-
Liability gains/(losses) arising during the period	-	908,000
Total amount recognised in other comprehensive income	2,769,000	1,069,000

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Movement in Deficit during the year	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Net defined benefit pension liability at the beginning of the year	(2,386,000)	(3,213,000)
Current service cost	(230,000)	(286,000)
Employer contributions	104,000	111,000
Interest on the net defined benefit liability	(63,000)	(67,000)
Actuarial (losses)/gains	2,769,000	1,069,000
Net defined benefit pension asset/(liability) at the end of the year	194,000	(2,386,000)

Changes to the present value of the defined benefit obligation during the period

	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Opening defined benefit obligation	11,046,000	11,583,000
Current service cost	230,000	286,000
Interest expense on defined benefit obligation	297,000	242,000
Contributions by participants	42,000	44,000
Actuarial gains/(losses) due to changes in Financial Assumptions	(4,515,000)	-
Actuarial gains/(losses) due to changes in Demographic Assumptions	32,000	-
Actuarial gains/(losses) due to Liability Experience	873,000	-
Actuarial losses/(gains) on liabilities	-	(908,000)
Net benefits paid out	(173,000)	(201,000)
Closing defined benefit obligation	7,832,000	11,046,000

Changes to the fair value of assets during the period

	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Opening fair value of assets	8,660,000	8,370,000
Interest income on assets	234,000	175,000
Remeasurement (losses)/gains on assets	(841,000)	161,000
Contributions by the employer	104,000	111,000
Contributions by participants	42,000	44,000
Net benefits paid out	(173,000)	(201,000)
Closing fair value of assets	8,026,000	8,660,000

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Actual return on assets	2022-23 £	2021-22 £
Interest income on assets	234,000	175,000
Gain/(loss) on assets	(841,000)	161,000
Actual return on assets	(607,000)	336,000

The split of the defined benefit obligation at the last valuation date between the various categories of members was as follows:

Active members	33%
Deferred Pensioners	32%
Pensioners	35%

17. Related party transactions

	2022-23 £'s	2021-22 £'s
The Executive Office	3,268,494	3,224,987

During the year, the Community Relations Council has had various material transactions with the Good Relations and Governance Branch of the Executive Office which is regarded as a related party. The Community Relations Council received a total of £3,268,494 (2021-22: £3,224,987) in Grant in Aid from The Executive Office during 2022-23.

	2022-23 £'s	2021-22 £'s
ECNI	126,948	120,597

ECNI is regarded as a related party since it is an Arm's Length Body of The Executive Office. The Community Relations Council relocated premises to Equality House on 23rd March 2016. The amount paid to ECNI during the 2022-23 financial year totalled £126,948 (2021-22: £120,597).

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Directors:

Some Directors of the Company may also carry out various roles within organisations which receive financial assistance from The Community Relations Council. The Directors disclose these interests on an annual basis by submitting 'Declaration of Interests' returns. Relevant interests are also declared during the normal business and procedures of the Board and its Committee. During the year, the following payments were made to organisations related to Directors:

- Nisha Tandon is Executive Director of ArtsEkta, which was in receipt of two grant under the CRCDC programme totalling £7,400 (2021-22: £9,084.24).

18. Financial Regularity

No cases of financial irregularity that required investigation by the Community Relations Council occurred in the 2022-23 financial year.

19. Events after the reporting date

There have been no significant events since the balance sheet date that would affect these accounts or require disclosure.

20. Contingent Liabilities

No contingent liabilities are known to have existed at the 31st March 2023.

Date of authorisation for issue

The Accounting Officer authorised these Accounts for issue on 22nd November 2023

Appendix 1

Additional Disclosures to comply with FReM

This additional disclosure has been prepared in accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM). FReM is a technical guide for the preparation of financial statements of public bodies. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Community Relations Council for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected.

FReM requires Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) to regard grant in aid received as contributions from controlling parties giving rise to a financial interest in the residual interest of the body, and hence accounted for as financing, i.e. by crediting them to the income and expenditure reserve. Grants are recognised as financing in the year which they are received.

On 1st April 2012, the Community Relations Council was designated as an Executive NDPB and as a result cannot recognise Grant in Aid as income. If the Community Relations Council were to comply with FReM, the following statements would be the effect of this compliance.

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

		2022-23 £	2021-22 £
Income	Note	42,505	14,874
Total Operating Income		42,505	14,874
Expenditure			
Staff costs	3	908,983	978,864
Grant expenditure	4	2,323,278	2,251,976
Purchase of goods and services	App 1	215,052	289,968
Depreciation and impairment charges	App 1	63,937	14,754
Other Operating Expenditure	App 1	68,713	67,166
Total Operating Expenditure		3,579,963	3,602,728
Net Expenditure for the year		(3,537,458)	(3,587,854)
Other Comprehensive Expenditure			
Actuarial gain/(loss) on defined benefit pension scheme	16	2,769,000	1,069,000
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year		(768,458)	(2,518,854)

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2023

	Note	2022-23 £	2021-22 £
Non-current assets			
Tangible Fixed assets	7	185,252	21,664
Intangible assets	8	7,688	14,496
Total non-current assets		192,940	36,160
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables	9	8,086	32,214
Cash and cash equivalents	10	101,136	115,529
Total current assets		109,222	147,743
Total assets		302,162	183,903

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	(695,454)	(664,388)
Finance Lease		(49,594)	-
		-----	-----
Total current liabilities		(745,048)	(664,388)
		-----	-----
Total assets less current liabilities		(442,886)	(480,485)
Non-current liabilities			
Non- Current Liabilities - Finance Lease	11	(117,563)	-
Defined benefit pension liability	16	194,000	(2,386,000)
		-----	-----
Total assets less total liabilities		(366,449)	(2,866,485)
		=====	=====
Taxpayers' equity and other reserves			
General fund	14	(366,449)	(2,866,485)
		-----	-----
Total Equity	14	(366,449)	(2,866,485)
		=====	=====

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31st March 2023

		2022-23	2021-22
		£	£
Cash flows from operating activities	Note		
Net Operating Cost		(3,579,963)	(3,602,729)
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation/amortisation charge	7/8	63,937	14,754
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors	9	24,128	1,832
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	11	31,066	193,843
Building Rent Payment	15	(50,855)	-
Interest Charge		1,759	-
<i>Movement in pension scheme deficit:</i>			
- Current service cost	16	230,000	286,000
- Employer pension contributions	16	(104,000)	(111,000)
- Interest on net defined benefit liability	16	63,000	67,000
		-----	-----
Net cash outflow from operating activities		(3,320,928)	(3,150,301)
		-----	-----

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	7	(4,464)	(5,042)
Purchase of intangible fixed assets	8	-	(1,500)
		-----	-----
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from investing activities		(4,464)	(6,542)
		-----	-----
Cash flows from financing activities			
Grants from sponsoring department	2	3,268,494	3,224,987
Secondment Income		42,505	14,874
		-----	-----
Net financing		3,310,999	3,239,861
		-----	-----
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents in the period		(14,393)	83,019
		-----	-----
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		115,529	32,509
		-----	-----
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period		101,136	115,529
		=====	=====

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year ended 31st March 2023

		General Fund £	Taxpayers' Equity £
Balance at 31st March 2021		(3,572,618)	(3,572,618)
Grant-in-aid from The Executive Office	2	3,224,987	3,224,987
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year	App. 1	(3,587,854)	(3,587,854)
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) for year	16	1,069,000	1,069,000
		-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2022		(2,866,485)	(2,866,485)
Grant-in-aid from The Executive Office	2	3,268,494	3,268,494
Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year	App. 1	(3,537,458)	(3,537,458)
Actuarial Gain/(Loss) for year	16	2,769,000	2,769,000
		-----	-----
Balance at 31st March 2023		(366,449)	(366,449)
		=====	=====

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Other Operating Costs

Purchase of goods and services	Note	2022-23	2021-22
		£	£
Programme costs		60,082	76,230
Postage, stationery and photocopier costs		720	614
Telephone		3,549	3,385
Rentals under operating leases		40,919	88,466
Repairs and maintenance		46,760	45,493
Professional fees		16,383	24,348
Sundry expenses		1,580	234
HR costs		13,414	19,991
External audit services		24,900	23,000
Internal audit services		6,675	8,207
Bank charges		70	-
		-----	-----
		215,052	289,968
		-----	-----
Depreciation and impairment charges			
Depreciation	7	57,129	7,821
Amortisation	8	6,808	6,933
		-----	-----
		63,937	14,754
		-----	-----
Other Operating Expenditure		2022-23	2021-22
		£	£
Staff travel and subsistence		2,675	45
Members and Committee expenses		1,279	121
Interest - Right of Use of Assets		1,759	-
Interest on net defined pension liability	16	63,000	67,000
		-----	-----
		68,713	67,166
		-----	-----

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Appendix 2: Grants Paid in 2022-23

Core Grant Scheme Awards 2022 – 2023

Please Note:

Multiple Councils – the grant was awarded for projects taking place in 2 – 4 District Council areas

Regional Councils – the grant was awarded for projects taking place in 5 – 11 District Council areas

Reference	Name	Short Description	Amount (£)
Antrim and Newtownabbey			
CFC22/41007	Community Relations Forum	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	37,437.56
Total for Antrim and Newtownabbey			37,437.56
Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon			
CFC22/41024	Shankill Parish Caring Association	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	34,323.25
Total for Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon			34,323.25
Belfast			
CFC22/41040	East Belfast Mission	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	51,606.38
CF22/40010	Falls Women's Centre	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	28,160.26
CF22/40060	North Belfast Interface Network	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	29,476.12
CFC22/41014	Springboard Opportunities Limited	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	51,782.38
Total for Belfast			161,025.14
Causeway Coast and Glens			
CFC22/41018	BCRC	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	40,529.88
Total for Causeway Coast and Glens			40,529.88
Derry and Strabane			
CFC22/41036	The Churches Trust Ltd	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	62,877.13
Total for Derry and Strabane			62,877.13
Multiple			
CF22/40017	Belfast YMCA Limited	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	38,702.64
CF22/40045	Community Relations in Schools (CRIS)	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	79,994.26
CF22/40040	Early Years-the organisation for Young children	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	75,027.27
CF22/40023	Falls Community Council	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	36,205.54
CFC22/41008	Intercomm	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	28,206.42
CF22/40038	PeacePlayers International - Northern Ireland	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	55,306.90
CF22/40041	Tobar Mhuire Retreat Centre	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	19,349.75
Total for Multiple			332,792.78

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Regional			
CFC22/41010	An Gaeláras Limited	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	28,283.63
CF22/40009	Beyond Skin	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	18,673.00
CF22/40048	Irish FA Foundation	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	29,237.30
CF22/40030	Irish School of Ecumenics Belfast	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	29,306.12
CF22/40016	Londonderry Bands Forum	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	45,953.24
CFC22/41038	Nerve Centre	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	26,917.74
CFC22/41033	North West Play Resource Centre	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	37,096.68
CFC22/41028	Partisan Productions	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	33,181.00
CFC22/41023	Rural Community Network	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	59,120.26
CFC22/41022	The Corrymeela Community	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	68,177.75
CFC22/41019	The Junction/Holywell Trust Core Funding Partnership	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	80,195.04
CFC22/41016	TIDES Training	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	56,017.00
CF22/40025	Trademark	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	62,362.54
CF22/40014	Ulster GAA	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	43,184.74
CFC22/41035	Youth Initiatives NI	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	28,798.66
CF22/40026	Youth Link	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity	55,694.27
Total for Regional			702,198.97
Overall Total			1,371,184.71

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Community Relations Cultural Diversity Grant Scheme 2022 – 2023

Please Note:

Multiple Councils – the grant was awarded for projects taking place in 2 – 4 District Council areas

Regional Councils – the grant was awarded for projects taking place in 5 – 11 District Council areas

Reference	Name	Short Project Description	Amount (£)
Antrim and Newtownabbey			
CRC22/42131	Falls Women's Centre	50 women will meet at a cross-community social event to hear a talk on drumming traditions, followed by discussion and a buffet supper.	860.00
Total for Antrim and Newtownabbey			860.00
Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon			
CRC22/42013	The John Hewitt Society	The John Hewitt International Summer School is a celebrated week-long Festival of Literature and the Arts. The festival provides platforms for debate and discussion to explore the key political and cultural issues of the day, empowering audiences to think critically about their own communities and the world around them.	4,270.00
CRC22/42214	Rathfriland and District Regeneration Company Ltd	A cultural fusion project celebrating Burns Night and St Patrick using music, dance and poetry to break down perceptions and bring people together in Rathfriland.	1,249.98
Total for Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon			5,519.98
Belfast			
CRC22/42017	Highspring Residents Group	The group are providing a single identity diversionary festival in the Highfield area for the local community during the annual Whiterock band parade. The group look to maintain the good relationships built between both communities in the area by providing an alternative and keeping local youth away from the trouble hotspot of the Springfield Road.	1,150.00

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

CRC22/42022	Lagan Village Youth and Community Group	The group is delivering a 6 week programme of cultural diversity awareness, understanding to a group of 20 young people where they will learn about music, language, dance and other cultural aspects of the different cultures that not only live in the local community but also in the Belfast area.	2,340.00
CRC22/42028	Community Relations in Schools (CRIS)	The group have planned a 3 pronged approach to re-engage both the parents/carers of children that have been part of the Buddy Up programme over the years and also new parents associated with the 6 feeder primary schools across North Belfast.	3,134.00
CRC22/42029	Prime Cut Productions	In My Own Words is a creative writing project designed to result in an Anthology of New Writing from women across Belfast and a Digitised Performance. It is aimed at people whose lives have been adversely and negatively impacted by the legacy of the Northern Irish conflict in order to give a platform and opportunity for expression to the many under-represented citizens of Belfast.	4,250.00
CRC22/42036	All Nations Ministries	All Nations Ministries is planning to host "Global Fun Day". In order to promote social inclusion of immigrant minority communities in NI; provide an opportunity for ethnic minority community members to share their experiences and culture with local NI communities - to enable the building of trust and understanding.	1,364.37
CRC22/42049	Conway Education Centre	Welcoming our new neighbours. This project aims to improve relations and reduce barriers between local residents and refugee & asylum seeking families who have been housed in west Belfast. The project joins English language learning, key to communication and integration, with learning about Belfast society	810.38

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

CRCD22/42056	British Youth Music Theatre	The project celebrates and acknowledges the important role of peace builders, promoting awareness amongst young cast members, as well as through performances at the Lyric.	2,499.88
CRCD22/42062	Fighting Words Northern Ireland	Deliver 4 cross community creative writing workshops in East Belfast for young people to explore cultural diversity culminating in a showcase.	3,378.37
CRCD22/42066	Family Comfort NI	The project will create a diverse range of activities that would bring people from different cultures with different beliefs together to encourage and build community unity.	1,600.00
CRCD22/42080	Belfast Won't Always Be Like This	The group are planning a full feature documentary tackling the separation walls from a community perspective, and how to end segregation in Belfast	2,000.00
CRCD22/42081	Refuge Language	This project will see the creation of a Conversation Club for NI's Ukrainian population, many of whom are new in the country.	4,636.38
CRCD22/42097	Belfast Exposed	This women's cross-community creative project takes inspiration from the Belfast Exposed archive, explores the legacy of internment and empowers women to harness leadership within communities.	4,898.70
CRCD22/42105	BHSCT	Information stalls, speeches, performances, talks, lived experiences - all an opportunity to learn and explore how to sustain good mental health with good relations.	1,000.00
CRCD22/42107	Coiste na nIarchimí	To assure community leaders of the grassroots work Coiste and EPIC do for reconciliation within and between communities	400.00
CRCD22/42110	EPIC	The British Irish Association Conference offers a unique opportunity to access a wide range of policy influencers from both the political and community sectors.	400.00

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

CRCD22/42111	Northern Ireland Interfaith Forum	An evening event with a wide range of culturally diverse musicians/artists/speakers to celebrate International Peace Day hosted in a neutral Belfast venue.	1,430.00
CRCD22/42113	East Belfast Enterprise	To engage communities from either side of a peace line to work together on a mural art-work, reflecting their experiences and future aspirations.	2,500.00
CRCD22/42126	Multi-Ethnic Sports And Cultures Northern Ireland(MSCNI)	We plan to use this medium to bring youths of various community backgrounds together with a sports festival using various sports and Cultural activities.	1,855.20
CRCD22/42130	All Nations Ministries	Hosting 2 multicultural celebration events for marginalised refugee/asylum seeker women and young people in N. Belfast.	1,280.57
CRCD22/42140	Belfast South Community Resources	Event where members of the community will enjoy an evening of learning and participating in Indian cultural traditions to celebrate Diwali.	1,500.00
CRCD22/42142	Imagine Belfast	The project is taking place 20-26 March 2023 with at least 80 events involving over 8,000 people in discussion on diversity & good relations issues.	3,750.00
CRCD22/42147	174 Trust	'Faith Together for the Common Good' - a 1/2 day Conference	450.00
CRCD22/42172	Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum	Provide shared trauma training to local people and young people across a North Belfast interface as they deal with people facing trauma and poverty	1,649.00
CRCD22/42185	EastSide Arts	Creating Space will promote integration and cultural diversity by supporting Hosford's Women's Group to explore their creativity and share their stories through trauma-informed arts practice.	1,352.00
CRCD22/42201	ArtsEkta	ArtsEkta hope to present a large outdoor procession and experience centered around the stories of Goddesses and Gods of Global Mythology using visual arts.	2,400.00

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

CRC22/42226	DU Dance NI	Bringing together women from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds all of whom live in West Belfast to connect, create, share and celebrate through dance.	1,440.00
CRC22/42241	Museum of the Troubles Initiative	We would like to reflect the result of the women's work, that is the design of their exhibit of their experiences during the Troubles, digitally.	675.00
Total for Belfast			54,143.85
Derry and Strabane			
CRC22/42024	The Churches Trust Ltd	Art Exhibition and showcase of creative outputs of the Uniting Opportunities, Community of Homes project, a personal development Good Relations themed project where young people build positive relationship and together address barriers to community participation.	2,484.00
CRC22/42026	Rural Housing Association	A series of Pop-up Global Cafes in rural communities, will celebrate diversity and cultures from across the globe using art, cookery and interactive workshops	4,800.69
CRC22/42040	Kerala Association	Bringing people from all the communities together through art, culture and education thus building good relations between them.	1,500.00
CRC22/42067	An Gaeláras Limited	Providing language classes in a venue accessible to people from communities where learning Irish is not viewed as traditional, e.g. communities described as broadly Unionist.	3,895.00
CRC22/42101	Londonderry Bands Forum	Deliver cross border workshops and a concert in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin in the build up to St Patrick's Day in a shared Island performance.	1,500.00

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

CRC22/42171	Newbuildings Cricket Club	The project will bring young people from the Newbuilding's and surrounding areas together in a programme of activities designed to provide inclusivity and remove stereotypes.	1,100.00
CRC22/42176	Lincoln Courts Youth and Community Association	It will focus on developing a greater understanding, forging stronger links and focus on breaking down sectarian barriers between young people from greater waterside area.	1,370.00
Total for Derry and Strabane			16,649.69
Fermanagh and Omagh			
CRC22/42058	Dylan Quinn Dance Theatre	A programme of 160 hours of creative dance workshops for young people living in and around Omagh and Enniskillen. Exploring diversity and celebration of community.	2,500.00
CRC22/42118	Erne East Community Partnership (Ltd)	To extend knowledge/understanding through shared cross community Men's Shed heritage and environmental greenwood/upcycled woodcraft activities delivered in shared spaces/services which are accessible to all.	1,770.00
CRC22/42129	George Elliott BKYL Academy	Good relations football and educational programme which will encourage greater levels of respect, learning, tolerance and understanding amongst young people in the Fermanagh/Omagh area.	1,204.00
Total for Fermanagh and Omagh			5,474.00
Multiple			
CRC22/42007	EMSONI - Ethnic Minority Sports Organisation NI	Confederation festival is designed as a multicultural day to celebrate shared space, community cohesion, cultural diversity and the cultures of the 20 participating communities that will come together for 11 weeks of intercommunity football activities.	4,800.00

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

CRCD22/42019	Belfast YMCA Limited	This exciting new project is about young people getting to experience what life is like for others in their community. Participants will not just talk about cultural diversity, they will experience it first-hand through a week long programme of visits to places of worship, dialogue sessions in which young people will share their reflections and learning in a mixed group.	1,161.00
CRCD22/42042	Castle Juniors FC	This project will offer young people an opportunity to combine a residential football festival with teams across Europe and an educational programme focusing on diversity. Community Relations elements will address sectarianism and racism while engaging with other young people from different cultures.	2,320.00
CRCD22/42050	Sole Purpose Productions	Sole Purpose is planning to work with PsycheDelight Theatre Company to bring their play 'Mohand and Peter' to Derry and Belfast for Community Relations Week.	4,285.00
CRCD22/42054	Together in Music	A series of 6 Cross Community work shops for musicians who represent Ulster Scots and Irish Traditional cultures. The Workshops will concentrate on the common roots that underpin both these traditions and how these traditions have been used as weapons in the Constitutional issues still very much alive today. We will discuss the New Decade New Approach document and how it feeds into Cultural Identity	4,000.00
CRCD22/42057	TADA Rural Support Network	A multi-cultural networking event to bring together a diverse range of cultures to promote understanding, respect and engagement with all sections of the community.	3,700.00

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

CRC22/42060	Artsawonder	This project is an evening event with panels including members of the religious, political sphere, representatives of civil society punctuated with arts performances.	4,187.00
CRC22/42079	Kabosh	Kabosh present a regional tour of the award-winning 'Green & Blue' to coincide with Good Relations Week 2022. Accompanied by workshops and post-show discussions.	5,000.00
CRC22/42090	Two Castles Community Development Association	Soapbox Derby, with novelty races for both children & adults. Funday with traditional cultural activities and entertainment showcasing all sections of the community.	2,385.00
CRC22/42094	Beyond Skin	A culturally diverse festival celebrating the planting of 'the 100 Book' through performances, talks, workshops and a local artisan market.	4,090.00
CRC22/42122	Drumalis	The programme comprising 15 seminars and attracting diverse participants engages with TBUC Key Priority 4 with its emphasis on community belonging and cultural diversity.	1,490.00
CRC22/42190	Mandarin Speakers Association Derry	Chinese New Year Gala, Chinese class, art project, Chinese decoration to teach local people about Chinese culture and to reinforce Chinese culture with Chinese people	2,330.00
Total for Multiple			39,748.00
Newry, Mourne and Down			
CRC22/42045	Iur Cinn Fleadh	Dancing on the Green, 3 local housing estates, dancing, singing and music, Irish, Polish, Belfast choir. Bring fleadh out to communities, reach people of various cultures	1,630.25
CRC22/42059	Schomberg Society Kilkeel Limited	This project will improve community relations during the 11th July celebrations in Kilkeel by organising a major family-friendly Festival, which everyone feels safe to attend.	3,275.00
Total for Newry, Mourne and Down			4,905.25

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Regional			
CRCD22/42009	The Corrymeela Community	Faith in Each Other - a semi-annual residential programme that explores how religious identity in Northern Ireland affects one's sense of belonging	2,415.00
CRCD22/42014	Success Dragon & Lion Dance Association	To provide a multi-cultural Chinese New Year event, which will be entertaining, educational and inclusive. We aim to raise the profile of Chinese Community, other ethnic minorities and their culture, reduce stereotyping and develop ongoing partnerships	2,500.00
CRCD22/42018	Arts Ekta	This project will deliver the 16th edition of the multi award winning Belfast Mela, Northern Ireland's largest and leading celebration of cultural diversity. Belfast Mela (meaning to meet) is a major citizen-led cultural festival celebrating NI's diverse communities through many forms of music, dance, food, language and art.	5,000.00
CRCD22/42031	Spanner in the works theatre company	The Buttercup play spans over the last 4 decades of life in Northern Ireland. The play opens up an honest and difficult debate about how it's past has affected future generations. Suicide rates in Northern Ireland over the last few years have risen steeply, has our troubled past played a part in this?	4,550.00
CRCD22/42035	Northern Ireland Environment Link	NIEL wishes to employ a consultant or researcher to review the nature of engagement of ethnic minorities in environmental issues, projects, and activities.	5,000.00
CRCD22/42047	Irish School of Ecumenics	Church Fora bi-annual CONNECT conferences bring together representatives of Church Fora to learn more about significant societal issues (June conference: Faith and Democracy) to share experiences and learnings from their work programmes which aim to promote reconciliation, an end to sectarianism and racism, and a shared community.	1,182.00

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

CRC22/42048	The de Borda Institute	The Northern Ireland problem, based as it is on a belief in majoritarianism, may best be overcome by a more pluralist approach to decision-making.	475.00
CRC22/42051	Foundation for Forgiveness and Reconciliation	A new podcast series profiling peacemakers, activists and artists from both sides of the conflict here in N.I. The series will include 2 live events	4,650.00
CRC22/42053	Youth Initiatives	OUTBOUND is good relations volunteer leadership training & development programme for participants aged 15-25 from the 6 Northern Ireland YI youth community hubs.	3,470.23
CRC22/42078	Integrated Education Fund	The programme goal is to create better understanding of Integrated Education amongst faith groups by bringing together key figures at a series of interactive events.	470.00
CRC22/42103	Trademark	Education and dialogue workshops focused on issues of history, identity and cultural expression, concluding with a residential focused on the present and future of NI.	1,200.00
CRC22/42104	PeacePlayers International - Northern Ireland	The CDP will equip a new generation of young people with the knowledge, skills and confidence to build peace and reconciliation.	2,290.00
CRC22/42121	Community Dialogue	Community Dialogue and partners will meet to assess the state of the Agreement on its 25th anniversary and agree strategic responses to outstanding challenges.	2,438.00
CRC22/42136	Spanner in the works theatre company	6 performances / workshops of play what's if across Northern Ireland The story of one mother's loss. The Shankill Road, Belfast 1993	3,090.00
CRC22/42152	APAC	Exhibitions, a zine, and talk will be presented at Parliament Buildings Belfast. They will showcase APAC's cross community project that reflects diversity and culture.	1,620.00
CRC22/42163	Shared Future News	A launch event with interviews of participants in What Northern Ireland Means to Me book.	800.00

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

CRC22/42195	The Fostering Network	This project would support kinship fostering families to nurture hope through connecting with, understanding and celebrating each other, themselves, their cultures and diverse narratives.	1,700.00
CRC22/42203	Terra Nova Productions	Terra-Nova will bring 12+ diverse groups together to participate in 3 programmes exploring racial and cross-community issues through art, challenging misconceptions around our shared history.	1,270.00
CRC22/42219	JoinHer Network CIC	Celebration of women's achievements, successes and experiences that impact our diverse communities.	2,130.00
Total for Regional			46,250.23
Overall Total			173,551.00

North Belfast Scheme 2022

Reference	Name	Short Description	Amount (£)
Belfast			
NBF22/46001	Ardoyne Youth Enterprises	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	79,999.00
NBF22/46002	Ashton Centre	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	100,000.00
NBF22/46003	Ballsillan Community Forum	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	54,000.00
NBF22/46004	Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	108,000.00
NBF22/46005	Greater Whitewell Community Surgery	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	47,167.00
NBF22/46006	Intercomm	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	88,000.00
NBF22/46007	Ligoniel Improvement Association	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	60,000.00
NBF22/46008	Mount Vernon Community Development Fund	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	33,000.00
NBF22/46009	Shankill Women's Centre (SWC)	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	90,000.00
NBF22/46010	The Vine Centre	Support costs towards good relations projects in North Belfast	14,134.00
Overall Total			674,300.00

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Pathfinder Grant Scheme 2022 – 2023

Please Note:

Multiple Councils – the grant was awarded for projects taking place in 2 – 4 District Council areas

Reference	Name	Short Project Description	Amount (£)
Belfast			
PF22/43004	Forthspring Inter Community Group	The planned activities across 3 distinct cross community projects will focus on raising awareness of the key drivers of sectarianism, segregation and interface violence. Forthspring's message is about finding commonality, building positive community relations and promoting non-violence as a methodology for social action. They will also focus on good relations activity in an increasingly Multi-Cultural community, promoting and celebrating diversity.	22,319.00
PF22/43025	Blackmountain Shared Space Project	The programme is directly linked to the ongoing political/contentious discussions between residents, in particularly men in the Upper Springfield/Upper Shankill areas	7,500.00
Total for Belfast			29,819.00
Derry and Strabane			
PF22/43018	Cathedral Youth Club	Creative activities for young people which will impact on their physical and mental health as well as improving their understanding and knowledge of other cultures.	3,375.00
PF22/43023	Bloody Sunday Trust	This project will fund a PT community relations coordinator for the Bloody Sunday Trust putting a targeted resource into community relations work across the city.	14,665.00
Total for Derry and Strabane			18,040.00
Multiple			
PF22/43008	Shankill Women's Centre (SWC)	The group intends to provide a variety of project activities on a shared community (PUL/CNR) basis with GR/CD themes that will help create a more cohesive, peaceful society through: GR/CD Training/Courses, Dialogue, Personal Development, Residential, Conferences etc.	24,832.00
PF22/43010	St. Columb's Park House	St Columb's Park Reconciliation Trust is at the forefront of innovative peacebuilding within the Waterside area of the City. The organisation will deliver a series of community based good relations projects that meets the current needs of the communities with which they work. Their programming includes working and mediating at one of the City's most 'active' interface areas, engaging young people at a flashpoint between the peace bridge and a predominantly PUL community.	21,736.52
Total for Multiple			46,568.52
Overall Total			94,427.52

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

Publications Grant Scheme 2022- 2023

Please Note:

Regional Councils – the grant was awarded for projects taking place in 5 – 11 District Council areas

Reference	Name	Book Title	Amount (£)
Regional			
Pubs22/44013	North West Cultural Partnership	Division, Partition, and Political Change in Ireland 1920-1925	1,470.00
Pubs22/44014	Irish School of Ecumenics	Is There A Common Good? An Educational Resource	4,700.00
Pubs22/44034	Trademark	The Double Transition: 25 Years Since the Good Friday Agreement	2,711.00
Overall Total			8,881.00

Media Grant Scheme 2022 – 2023

Reference	Name	Short Description of Project	Amount (£)
Belfast			
Media22/45012	Northern Visions	An engagement process with community groups involved in community relations work and peace building to deliver a series of four discussion programmes around predetermined themes and four location based news features, highlighting their work and best practice for broadcast on NVTV, Belfast's local public service channel.	5000.00
Media22/45030	Richard Willis	"Disagreeing Well" will blend a powerful and bespoke piece of spoken word poetry (performed by Fighting Word's Benji Wallis), with striking animated visuals. The overarching message of the piece will challenge how young people engage and communicate with those that they do not agree with.	5,000.00
Total for Belfast			10,000.00
Derry and Strabane			
Media22/45022	Holywell Trust	Following the success of the Forward Together Podcast, we will continue and deepen the conversations that have been started through the reimaged Holywell Trust Conversations podcast series. For this	4,954.37

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

		series we will carry out 18 new interviews with linked articles on Slugger O'Toole.	
		Total for Derry and Strabane	4,954.37
		Overall Total	14,954.37



© Northern Ireland Community Relations Council 2023

Published by the
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council
Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast BT2 7DP

Tel: 028 9022 7500
Email: info@nicrc.org.uk

The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council is an independent company limited by guarantee (no. NI24026) and is accepted as a charity by the Charities Commission ref: 107530. It has also been designated as a non-departmental public body under The Executive Office of the government of Northern Ireland