



Planning Appeals
Commission



Water Appeals
Commission

The Planning and Water Appeals Commissions

Annual Review 2020/21

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CHIEF COMMISSIONER'S STATEMENT

This is the annual review of the Planning Appeals Commission and the Water Appeals Commission (PACWAC) for the year April 2020 to March 2021.

Like everyone else, PACWAC has been affected both personally and professionally by the COVID pandemic. We have adapted to the situation as best we can and have managed to continue to deliver our essential services thanks to the dedication of our workforce. The important contribution of external stakeholders must be recognised and I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those involved who have helped us take forward new initiatives such as remote hearings, electronic exchange pilots and early submission of evidence.

At the time of our office closure on 24th March 2020 we had a number of parties (Councils and agents) who had advised us that due to the pandemic they would not be able to meet evidence submission deadlines. Given the uncertainty at the time we made the decision to suspend all arrangements for the submission of evidence. This has had an impact on the recovery of business. Once we received confirmation that access to justice was deemed essential work we made plans for reopening the office. We officially reopened on 11 May and started to request the submission of evidence at the beginning of June. Since then we have been working through cases that were in the system at point of lockdown and then dealing with new cases as they were submitted. Written representations have proceeded in the normal fashion while arrangements for accompanied site visits were suspended.

Hearings have provided the greatest challenge. At the point of lockdown we commenced discussions with our sponsor Branch colleagues in Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service who provide our IT support. We were able to hold our first remote hearing at the end of June 2020. Since that time we have held over 30 remote hearings before the end of the financial year. We have also used the same technology to facilitate the oral hearing sessions of the Belfast Local Development Plan Independent Examination.

Throughout the year we have continued to operate with reduced resources on both the administrative and Commissioner sides of the business. Despite the resourcing issues we successfully finished the year with no significant backlog in terms of case numbers. This was partly due to a reduced level of incoming appeals. We have a number of cases in hand where appellants did not wish to pursue the option of a remote hearing.

Last year I reported that efforts were underway to increase resources within the Commission. We have now made a number of appointments. Due to training requirements it will be some time before we see the benefits from the appointments. We expect to make a number of further appointments in the coming financial year to bring the Commissioner complement to 20 and administrative complement to 16.

Due to resourcing and impacts of the pandemic we have not achieved our performance targets and we have seen an increase in median times for decisions. In the circumstances this is to be expected. We have introduced new ways of working and some temporary response measures to aid business recovery.

Looking forward to the coming year we recognise that planning and the planning appeal system will have an important role to play in the recovery of the wider economy. We plan on building on some of the very positive steps we have made in the last year in terms of new ways of working. We will continue to do the best that we can both as individuals and as a corporate body within the context of the resources that we have available.

Our public engagement efforts have been somewhat curtailed during the pandemic but we have provided presentations to students from the Queen's University of Belfast and Ulster University. We have also had some very productive stakeholder engagement sessions and have undertaken pilot projects with a view to testing aspects of our new ICT system.

As ever, PACWAC relies on the support of Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Service and I would like to thank the officials in the Department that have provided support during the year. I also wish to express my gratitude to the Commissioners and administrative support team, without whom we would not have been able to continue to deliver our service.

In terms of the pandemic we are hopefully seeing some light at the end of what has been a very long tunnel. I would like to thank again all those involved in ensuring that we have been able to continue to deliver our service in what has been an exceptional year.

SECTION ONE

Our Work and People

Our Work and People

The Commissions

The Planning Appeals Commission is an independent appellate body established under statute to decide a wide range of appeals and to report various matters under planning and other legislation.

The Water Appeals Commission, while sharing the vision, aims, objectives and core values of the Planning Appeals Commission, is a separate appellate body, exercising a wide range of functions under water, fisheries and drainage legislation.

Vision and Values

The Commissions' aim is to make the best possible appeal decisions and offer the best possible advice and recommendations to public bodies, consistent with the evidential context within which appellate functions are exercised.

As independent appellate bodies, the Commissions attach great importance to the following values in the undertaking of our work:

Delivering our service effectively

- Providing a high quality service to the public
- Maximising the benefit from available resources and providing value for money
- Aspiring to always improve

Being people-focused

- Being open, transparent and honest
- Treating everyone with respect and understanding different needs
- Developing and supporting our workforce to make the best use of skills and abilities

Dependability

- Approaching work with an open mind, without predisposition to any particular view
- Acting with professionalism and integrity

Accountability

The Commissions are not part of any Government Department. Financial and administrative support is provided by our sponsoring Department, the Department of Justice, through the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service.

The Commissions are completely autonomous in our decision-making and operation of the appeals, hearing, inquiry and examination processes. We are not answerable to any government Department or any other agency or public body. Our decisions are subject to the supervision of the Courts, reflecting our independent appellate roles in planning and environmental matters.

Our Work

The Commissions have two broad areas of work which for ease of discussion are categorised as Hear and Decide, and Hear and Report. Hear and Decide is the appeal casework. Appellants lodge appeals and the Commission considers the evidence and makes a final decision. In addition to the appeal decision the Commission may have to consider a costs claim if it is submitted.

Hear and Report is a second area of work which is less predictable and more resource intensive. The principal elements are firstly, public inquiries and hearings into regionally significant and called in planning applications, and secondly independent examinations into local development plans (LDPs). In these cases most referrals are made from the Department for Infrastructure (Dfi) to the Commission. The Commission will consider the evidence presented and report back to the planning authority who will make the final decision.

There are also a variety of other Hear and Report functions, including public inquiries into development schemes, vesting orders and road schemes, and hearings into the need for environmental impact assessments for planning applications.

Our People

Our work is carried out by a number of Commissioners supported by an administrative team. We have had a number of new individuals join the PACWAC team in the last year:

- Mr G Kerr
- Ms B Stevenson
- Mrs J McParland
- Mrs T McCreesh
- Ms S Hanna

Two members of the Commissions' team retired within the period of the report:

- Mr T Rue in September 2020
- Mrs B McGlinchey in February 2021

The Commission extends its thanks for their valued contribution to the organisation.

Commissioners

Chief Commissioner

Miss A Kells BA MSc LLB MRTPI

Deputy Chief Commissioner

Mr T A Rue MA DipTP MRTPI (to 30 September 2020)

Ms M Jones BA BArch ARIBA (from 1 February 2021)

Principal Commissioners

Ms M Jones BA BArch ARIBA (to 31 January 2021)

Ms P O'Donnell DipTP MRTPI

Mrs H Fitzsimons BSc DipTP MRTPI (from 22 February 2021)

Senior Commissioners

Ms R Daly BSc MSc MRTPI

Ms J De-Courcey BSc MSc LLB MRTPI

Mr A Speirs BSc MRTPI

Mr K Donaghey BSc MRTPI

Mrs P Boomer BSc DipTP MRTPI (from 3 April 2020)

Dr D O'Neill BSc DipTP PhD MRTPI (from 3 August 2020)

Mrs J McParland MSc MRTPI (from 8 March 2021)

Commissioners

Mr D Hannon DipTP MRTPI

Ms D McShane BA MTP MEPPA MRTPI

Mr M Watson BSc Dip TP MRTPI

Mr G Kerr BSc MSc MRTPI (from 2 November 2020)

Ms B Stevenson BSc MRTPI (from 9 November 2020)

Mrs H Fitzsimons BSc DipTP MRTPI (to 21 February 2021)

Mrs P Boomer BSc DipTP MRTPI (to 2 April 2020)

Dr D O'Neill BSc DipTP PhD MRTPI (to 2 August 2020)

Mrs B McGlinchey BSc MEPPA MRTPI (to February 2021)

Administrative Team

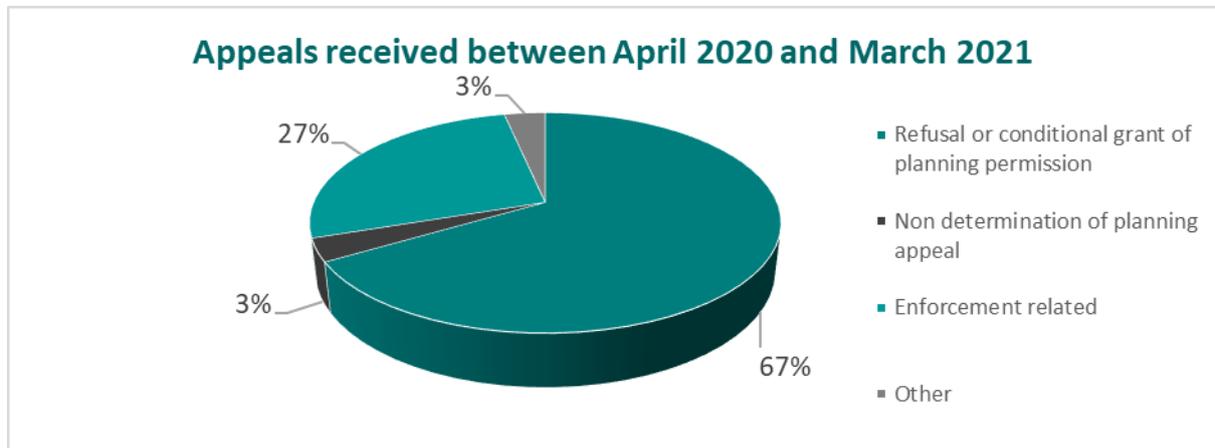
Chief Administrative Officer	Mrs F Campbell (to 23 January 2021) Ms Sioban Hanna (from 24 January 2021)
Office Manager	Mrs J O'Connor (from 1 June 2020)
Team Leaders	Mrs J O'Connor (to 31 May 2020) Mr C Morgan Mrs T McCreesh (from 6 April 2020) Vacant (due to T/P of post-holder to LDP work) Vacant (due to T/P of post-holder to Office Manager)
Case Officers	Miss Y Adgey Ms J Millar Mr J Nelson Mrs R Rodgers Not disclosed Not disclosed
Administrative Support Officer	Mrs E McShane
LDP Senior Manager	Mr C Purvis
Programme Officers	Mr B Fegan Mr J Bickerstaff

SECTION TWO

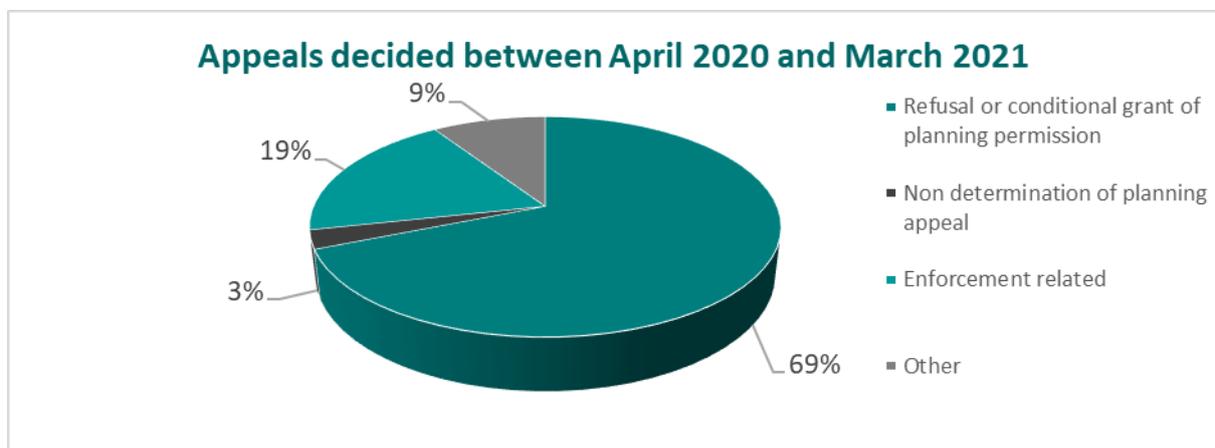
Analysis of casework

Appeals Overview

Appeals received between April 2020 and March 2021



Appeals decided between April 2020 and March 2021



Hear and Decide

Appeals Caseload

The following tables set out detailed information on the volume of casework processed by the Planning Appeals Commission, the means of processing appeals, delivery times achieved and appellants' success rates for each procedure.

Table 1: Appeals received, by appeal type

Appeal type	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Refusal or conditional grant of planning permission	221	207	204	215	139
Non determination of planning application	4	4	9	9	7
Enforcement related	53	53	67	69	56
Other *advertisements, roads, listed buildings consent	22	45	43	34	7
TOTAL	300	309	323	327	209

The number of appeals lodged with the Commission was less than those received in recent years.

Planning activities during 2020/21 were impacted by the government restrictions put in place due to the COVID pandemic. This should be borne in mind and caution should be taken when interpreting these figures and when making comparisons with other time periods. This has had an impact on all appeal types and therefore the trend shown in these tables is not indicative of what would normally be expected.

This hiatus did provide the Commission with the flexibility to address its own COVID response and presented the opportunity to introduce a more modern and flexible approach to administering hearings.

One of the main outcomes has been that despite the severe restrictions the COVID pandemic had placed on the Commission, the number of cases carried forward into the 2021/22 year is broadly similar to the total carried forward from 2019/20 to 2021/22.

Table 2: Appeals decided, by appeal type

Appeal type	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Refusal or conditional grant of planning permission	221	198	179	175	126
Non determination of planning application	11	7	1	11	5
Enforcement related	36	44	56	51	35
Other	28	27	42	40	17
TOTAL	296	276	278	277	183

In addition to the appeals outlined above 27 appeals received in 20/21 were subsequently withdrawn and a further 5 appeals were deemed to be invalid.

Table 3: Appeals decided by appeal category, excluding enforcement-related and other types

Appeal category	Number	%
Single dwelling in the countryside	45	34
Multiple housing	23	18
Householder	15	12
Single dwelling in an urban area	14	11
Industry, business and distribution	12	9
Agricultural	5	4
Retail	5	4
Other residential	4	3
Houses in multiple occupancy	3	2
Tourist accommodation	2	1
Other non-residential	2	1
Mixed use	1	1
TOTAL	131	100%

Single dwellings in the countryside and multiple housing continue to represent the largest number of appeals decided; however due to the impact of COVID responses, both the numbers decided and percentage of the total decreased for both categories on last year.

Table 4: Appeals allowed, by appeal type

Appeal type	Number decided	Number allowed	Success rate %
Refusal or conditional grant of planning permission	126	41	33%
Non determination of planning application	5	2	40%
Enforcement related	35	21	60%
Other	17	9	53%
TOTAL	183	63	34%

Table 5: Appeals allowed, by procedure

Procedure		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Hearing	Number	128	116	128	99	43
	Allowed	40	31	55	44	24
	% Allowed	31%	27%	43%	44%	56%
Written representations with accompanied site visit	Number	92	101	92	109	17
	Allowed	23	29	26	42	2
	% Allowed	25%	29%	28%	39%	12%
Written representations with Commissioner site visit	Number	76	59	58	69	124
	Allowed	21	12	20	28	47
	% Allowed	28%	20%	34%	41%	38%

Arrangements for Accompanied Site Visits (ASV) and hearings were put on hold at the start of the lockdown in March 2020. ASVs remained suspended. Measures for the introduction of remote hearings became operational in May 2020.

The above statistics include decisions in relation to hearings and ASVs carried out in 2019/20 as well as remote hearings conducted in 20/21. Success rates vary from year to year and between different appeal procedures; as each appeal is decided on its own specific facts and individual circumstances. The Commission considers that success rate variations hold no particular significance and that there is no connection between an appeal outcome and the means of processing employed.

Please note the figures below exclude appeals against non-determination, enforcement notices, conditional grant of planning permission and those categorised as 'other' by PAC. We expect these figures will be replicated in the Planning Monitoring Framework which will be published by the Department for Infrastructure.

Table 6: Percentage of appeals against refusal of planning permission that are dismissed

Council	Number of appeals against refusals determined**	Number dismissed (i.e., the council's decision was upheld)**	Percentage of decisions upheld
Antrim & Newtownabbey	9	7	78%
Ards & North Down	4	1	25%
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	6	2	33%
Belfast City	17	12	71%
Causeway Coast & Glens	17	11	65%
Derry City & Strabane	3	3	100%
Fermanagh & Omagh	12	9	75%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	12	10	83%
Mid & East Antrim	6	3	50%
Mid Ulster	6	4	66%
Newry, Mourne & Down	31	22	71%
Northern Ireland	123	84	68%

**** These figures exclude appeals against non-determination, enforcement notices, conditional grant of planning permission and those categorised as 'other' by PAC.**

Table 7: Appeal decisions: median time in weeks

Procedure	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Hearing	29	27	23	28	43

Written representations with accompanied site visit	21	21	19	27	35
Written representations with Commissioner site visit	20	22	20	26	37
All decisions median weeks	23	23	21	27	38

There has been a continued need to direct our reduced resources to other business areas and that, combined with lost weeks due to planning and implementing our COVID response, has resulted in an increase in median times achieved in 2020/21. The median time taken to process enforcement-related appeals was 44 weeks.

Performance Measures: Hear and Decide

Measure:

To decide 80% of appeals within specified timeframes* as set out below:

- Informal hearings within 30 weeks;
- Written representations with an accompanied site visit within 28 weeks;
- Written representations with a Commissioner site visit within 26 weeks; and
- Enforcement-related appeals within 34 weeks.

*excluding cases where delays are caused by the appellant, and developments involving an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Not achieved.

Overall, the Commission decided on 17 % of all appeals within the specified time frames.

Table 8: Appeals in hand at year end

Year	Number
2015/16	183
2016/17	142
2017/18	157
2018/19	169
2019/20	201
2020/21	201

Given the restrictions imposed by COVID-19 responses, the reduced availability of Commissioners and Admin staff to undertake this work, while at the same time managing the training requirements of newly appointed staff and Commissioners it is reassuring to note that the number of appeals in hand has remained very similar to that recorded in last year's report. A number of the cases in hand relate to appeals which could not be progressed due to issues with gaining safe access to sites or where appellants did not wish to have their case heard by remote hearing. It is anticipated that as the impact of COVID lessens and we secure and train the additional resources we need, there will be a positive effect on the number of cases in hand at future year ends.

Quality

Table 9: Complaints, received and whether justified

Procedure	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Number of	16	17	15	15	4

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complaints received					
Number of justified complaints	2	3	1 plus 1 partially justified	1 plus 2 partially justified	1

The Commissions' complaints system allows for the investigation of complaints received in line with our Complaints Procedure made by any party involved in proceedings before the Commissions. All complaints are investigated and a relevant response issued to the complainant. Where complaints are found to be justified, an explanation and apology are provided. Of the four complaints received by the Commissions in 2019/20, one was found to be justified.

The Independent Complaints Audit Panel (ICAP) has reviewed the complaints made in 2019/20 and 2020/21. Their report is now available on our website.

Table 10: Judicial Reviews

Procedure	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Number of challenges	6	4	4	3	5
Number of successful challenges	2	2	1	2	1

The Commissions' decisions can be challenged by an application to the High Court for judicial review, on a point of law only. In circumstances where the decision is clearly flawed the judicial review application is not contested by the Commissions. In the event of a successful challenge, following receipt of the Court Order the appeal is reheard by a different Commissioner from that which made the original decision and a new decision is issued. In 2020/21 five applications for judicial review were made; one was successful; three remain within the court system.

Measure:

To ensure that the number of appeal decisions giving rise to a justified complaint or successful judicial review challenge in the previous and current accounting years amounts to no more than 1.5% of the total number of appeal decisions issued in that two-year period.

Achieved.

The proportion of appeal decisions which were associated with a justified or partially justified complaint, or successful judicial review challenge, remains constant at 1.5%. This means that 98.5% of our decisions are free from challenge. The Commissions are committed to providing decisions of the highest quality, and the lessons learned from these cases have been shared with Commissioners and administrative staff to ensure that procedures are

followed correctly and a high standard of decision making and customer service are maintained.

Costs Awards

The Commission is empowered to make Orders as to the costs of the parties involved in planning and other appeals. Costs awards are intended to provide redress where unreasonable behaviour by one party to an appeal has put another party to unnecessary expense. It is on this basis that the Commission assesses claims for costs.

The Commission will normally award costs only where all four of the conditions below have been met:

- A party has made a timely appeal and
- The claim relates to an appeal of the type specified in the Planning Act; and
- The party against whom the award is sought has acted unreasonably; and
- The unreasonable behaviour has caused the party claiming costs to incur unnecessary or wasted expense.

Table 11: Costs awards

Type of decision	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
No award	40	29	20	34	11
Partial award	4	2	7	6	1
Full award	1	10	8	8	1
TOTAL	45	41	35	48	13

The number of claims for costs decreased significantly in 2020/21 compared to the previous year. This, however, was an exceptional year and not reflective of what we would normally expect.

We expect the figures below will be replicated in the Planning Monitoring Framework which will be published by the Department for Infrastructure.

Table 12: Number of claims for costs received during the period (this may differ from the number of claims awarded during the same period)

Number of claims for costs received by the PAC		13*	
Number of claims for costs received by the PAC (involving planning authority)		12	
	Breakdown of claims for costs received by the PAC (involving planning authority)		
	Costs claims made by the planning authority	Costs claims received against the planning authority	Total number of cost claims received involving planning authority
Antrim & Newtownabbey	0	0	0
Ards & North Down	1	0	1
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	0	0
Belfast City	0	2	2
Causeway Coast & Glens	1	2	3
Derry City & Strabane	0	0	0
Fermanagh & Omagh	0	1	1
Lisburn & Castlereagh	0	1	1
Mid & East Antrim	0	0	0
Mid Ulster	0	1	1
Newry, Mourne & Down	0	3	3
Department for Infrastructure	0	0	0
Northern Ireland	2	10	12

*One case received by the PAC did not involve a claim by or against a planning authority.

Table 13: Number of instances where costs were either awarded fully or partially in the planning authority's favour. The indicator measures the number of instances, not the amount of money.

Claims for costs made by planning authority – awards				
	No award	Partial award	Full award	Total
Antrim & Newtownabbey	0	0	0	0
Ards & North Down	1	0	0	1
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	0	0	0
Belfast City	0	0	0	0
Causeway Coast & Glens	1	0	0	1
Derry City & Strabane	0	0	0	0
Fermanagh & Omagh	0	0	0	0
Lisburn & Castlereagh	0	0	0	0
Mid & East Antrim	0	0	0	0
Mid Ulster	0	0	0	0
Newry, Mourne & Down	0	0	0	0
Department for Infrastructure	0	0	0	0
Northern Ireland	2	0	0	2

Table 14: Number of instances where costs were either awarded wholly or partially against the planning authority. The indicator measures the number of instances, not the amount of money.

Claims for costs made against planning authority – awards				
	No award	Partial award	Full award	Total
Antrim & Newtownabbey	0	0	0	0
Ards & North Down	0	0	0	0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	0	0	0
Belfast City	2	0	0	2
Causeway Coast & Glens	2	0	0	2
Derry City & Strabane	0	0	0	0
Fermanagh & Omagh	1	0	0	1
Lisburn & Castlereagh	0	1	0	1
Mid & East Antrim	0	0	0	0
Mid Ulster	1	0	0	1
Newry, Mourne & Down	3	0	0	3
Department for Infrastructure	0	0	0	0
Northern Ireland	9	1	0	10

Hear and Report

Hear and Report is an area of work which is less predictable and more resource intensive than Hear and Decide casework. Currently the principal elements are public inquiries and hearings into regionally significant and called in planning applications. In these cases, referrals are made by the Department for Infrastructure to the Commission. The Commissioner will consider the evidence provide to them and report back to the Department, which will make the final decision.

There are also a variety of other Hear and Report functions, including public inquiries into development schemes, vesting orders and road schemes, and hearings on the need for Environmental Impact Assessments for planning applications.

2020/21 saw the first Independent Examination of a Local Development Plan (Belfast Council) carried out by the Commission. Through a lot of hard work and diligent preparation the LDP team was able to provide hearing sessions through the media of remote hearing and live streaming. Both the ability to conduct the Independent Examination remotely and the facility to live stream the event have been welcomed by all involved and received very positive feedback.

Public Inquiries

2019/D001 – A5 Western Transport Corridor Road Scheme

Having conducted a public inquiry in March 2020, the Commission presented a report to the Department for Infrastructure during 2020/21.

Hearings

2019/C002 – Lands at Ballydrain, Comber

A hearing in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment had been programmed to take place in the financial year 2020/21. Hearing arrangements were suspended pending resolution of related legal matters and will re-commence in 2021/22.

2019/C003 – Anaerobic Digester Plant, Bready

A hearing having been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment programming, which was to be decided in the financial year 2020/21 was suspended pending a decision on a related Enforcement Notice appeal.

2019/C004 – Proposed solar farm, Castlegore

The hearing programmed to take place in the financial year 2020/21 has been rescheduled for 2021/22.

2019/C005 – Slurry lagoon, Claudy

Having concluded a hearing in 2019/20, the Commission presented the report to the Council in 2020/21.

2019/C006, 2019/C007 and 2019/C008 – Heritage-led mixed use development and works to listed buildings, Maghera

A hearing has been programmed to take place in the financial year 2020/21. Arrangements were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic and programming will take place in 2021/22.

2020/C002 – Retention of pig sheds and slurry tanks and ancillary works, Kilkeel

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place in the financial year 2021/22.

2020/C003 & C004 – Proposed use of land for parking of cars, Bushmills

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place in the financial year 2021/22.

2020/C005 & C008 – Retrospective farm diversification scheme to include fishing lakes and amenity building, Limavady

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place in the financial year 2021/22.

2020/C006 – Hen sheds and ancillary works, Cumber Road, Claudy

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place in the financial year 2021/22.

2020/C007 – Proposed dairy shed including automated milking facilities, Lisbunny Road Dunamanagh Strabane

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place in the financial year 2021/22.

2020/C009 – Revocation of Outline Planning Permission: LA09/2019/1589/O

A hearing has been requested in relation to the Revocation order

2020/C010 – Leitrim Hill Quarry, Extension to an existing Quarry

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place in the financial year 2021/22

2020/C011 – Ardstraw Quarry Ltd, Urbalreagh Road, Victoria, Strabane

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place in the financial year 2021/22.

Local Development Plan Independent Examinations

The Commission has been referred two Development Plan Documents for Independent Examination (IE). The hearing sessions of the Belfast Plan Strategy have been completed. The appointed Commissioners are currently in the process of writing their report. The Fermanagh and Omagh Plan Strategy was referred to the Commission in mid-March.

We are continuing to encourage Councils and the Department to keep us informed regarding changes to their timetable and have actively engaged with Councils on administrative matters in relation to the submission of DPDs for independent examination. We are learning lessons from this new area of work and we will be actively reviewing procedures and practices in dealing with independent examinations to ensure that we are delivering the service that we provide in the most effective way. Evidence of this was the delivery of the remote hearing sessions which were live streamed for the Belfast IE. This has proved a very effective method to facilitate participation.

We had hoped to be in a position to ensure that a Commissioner resource is available for each plan as it arrives with us but given Commissioner workloads are scheduled approximately three months in advance this has caused difficulties. Given the need for the organisation to make best use of resources slippage, even minor, will result in a Commissioner being allocated to other work streams and this will continue to be the case as we focus on recovery in the incoming year.

Performance Measure – Hear and Report

Measure:

- To deliver 100% of reports on all hear-and-report cases to the Department by the indicative date announced at the end of the public proceedings.

Achieved

Water Appeals Commission

Appeals caseload

Table 15: Water appeals

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Water appeals received	5	1	3	2	1
Water appeals withdrawn	0	2	2	0	1
Water appeals decided	8	1	0	2	0
Water appeals in hand	2	0	1	1	0

Activity in this area remains at a low level.

SECTION THREE

Financial Statement

Financial Statement

Running costs

	2019/20		2020/21	
	£	%	£	%
Commissioners' salaries	1,196,033	68.77	1,335,793	68.82
Administrative staff salaries	249,997	14.37	334,199	17.22
Travel & subsistence	15,721	0.9	9,881	0.51
Accommodation charges	97,738	5.62	91,346	4.71
Advertising	31,859	1.83	19,136	0.99
External training	5,206	0.30	2,468	0.13
Legal fees	52,498	3.01	40,919	2.11
Postage & telephone charges	5,206*	0.30	4,042	0.21
Electricity	14,286	0.82	12,299	0.63
Library	11,606	0.67	9,328	0.48
Stationery & printing	3,784	0.22	4,374	0.22
Contract cleaning	10,230	0.59	11,264	0.58
Office equipment	1,080	0.06	932	0.05
Hospitality	1,768	0.10	0	0.00
Incidental expenses	16,663	0.96	20,391	1.05
Software maintenance contract	12,425	0.7	41,804#	2.15
Refund of fees	13,352	0.75	2,759	0.14
TOTAL	1,786,752	100	1,940,935	100

* amount corrected from £52,506, shown in 2019/20 Annual Report

increase on 2019/20 explained by the amalgamation of two account codes in the accounting system

Receipts

	2019/20	2020/21
	£	£
Appeal fees	76,423	27,314
Photocopying charges	0	0
TOTAL	76,423	27,314