



Planning Appeals
Commission



Water Appeals
Commission

The Planning and Water Appeals Commissions

Annual Review 2021/22

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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 financial year April 2021 to March 2022.

Like everyone else, PACWAC has continued to be affected by the COVID pandemic. Last year I recognised that the planning system would have an important role to play in the recovery of the wider economy. PACWAC planned on building on some of the positive steps made in terms of the implementation of new ways of working, in line with the resources available.

I reported that efforts were underway to increase resources within the Commission. There have been a number of appointments to the team but PACWAC continue to operate with reduced resources on both the administrative and professional sides of the business. Despite the resourcing issues PACWAC has undertaken significant work in addressing customer demands in relation to Information Technology and have been developing our new Case Management System and Customer Portal. This is expected to 'go-live' in 2022. The IT project has taken significant resource investment and will hopefully deliver a number of benefits.

It is acknowledged that the delivery of appeal decisions has not been to a level that will address business volumes. This is due to a combination of factors namely, the continued impact of the suspension of submission of evidence at the start of the pandemic, hearings being delayed due to appellants preference for physical hearings which recommenced June 2021, diversion of resources to assist on the IT project, timing of appointments to the Commission and a significant amount of the Commissioner cohort remaining in training meaning that the PACWAC has been operating at reduced capacity. Despite the poor figures referred to above, we have continued to provide a successful Local Development Plan programme with the first Independent Examination report provided to the Department for Infrastructure in September 2021. There are currently four further Independent Examinations in hand. PACWAC also saw an increase in the number of reports delivered in our Hear and Report work stream.

I acknowledge the patience shown by the majority of our external stakeholders as we work through the challenges placed on us because of the pandemic and the reduced capacity presently available. As outlined in the business plan, PACWAC intend to undertake an external engagement exercise later in the year to align our future operating model with the needs of our customers. We are also in continued discussions with our sponsor body (DoJ) in relation to the resourcing implications of referred work to the Commission.

The Commissions' performance measures have been set to ensure that they remain challenging, measurable and focused on the priorities of our customers. They remain as a benchmark for service delivery once we become fully operational again. Our priority within our appeal work stream in the incoming year, will be to focus on the quantum of cases before addressing timeliness issues. In parallel, we will continue to assign available resources to our Hear and Report work.

Our public engagement efforts have taken on a different focus and are predominately being delivered via online forums. During the year we have provided PACWAC input to the RTPI Planning Enforcement Conference, the NI Planning Law Update, Queen's University of Belfast, and Ulster University. These events have provided an excellent opportunity to promote an understanding of our role as an independent tribunal.

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 of Justice 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.

The next 12 months will see the onset of many new challenges including the implementation of electronic working, the development of a new operating model, addressing the backlog of appeal cases and referred work. PACWAC will as always endeavour to deliver to the best of our ability in line with the resources we have available.

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 on 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.

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.

All individuals within PACWAC should adhere to the seven principles of public life and they represent the underlying values that the organisation seeks to uphold:

- **Selflessness** – holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity** – holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity** – holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability** – holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness** – holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

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- **Honesty** – holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership** – Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

During the lifetime of this corporate plan we will commit to the following additional values:

Making a Difference

We commit to providing a high level of customer service, working professionally and ensuring that we deliver decisions or recommendations in a timely fashion

Maintaining Quality

We commit to ensuring that our decisions and recommendations are of the highest standards and Commissioners are exemplars within the planning profession

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 to them 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 K Gillespie BA (Hons) BPI MLegSc MRTPI
- Ms L Roddy BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI PIEMA
- Ms M McKearney BSc DipTP MRTPI
- Ms C McKeary BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI
- Mrs L Austin

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

- Ms S Hanna
- Mrs T McCreesh

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	Ms M Jones BA BArch ARIBA (To August 2021) Ms P O'Donnell DipTP MRTPI (From September 2021)
Principal Commissioners	Mrs H Fitzsimons BSc DipTP MRTPI (From February 2021) Ms R Daly BSc MSc MRTPI (From October 2021)
Senior Commissioners	Ms J De-Courcey BSc MSc LLB MRTPI Mr A Speirs BSc MRTPI Mr K Donaghey BSc MRTPI Mrs P Boomer BSc DipTP MRTPI Dr D O'Neill BSc DipTP PhD MRTPI

Ms R Daly BSc MSc MRTPI (To October 2021)

Ms M Jones BA BArch ARIBA (From
September 2021)

Ms J McParland BSc MRTPI

Ms C McDonagh BSc DipTP MRTPI

Ms L Roddy BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI PIEMA
(From November 2021)

Commissioners

Mr D Hannon BA DipTP MRTPI

Ms D McShane BA MTP MEPPA MRTPI

Mr M Watson BSc DipTP MRTPI

Mr G Kerr BSc MSc MRTPI

Ms B Stevenson BSc MSc MRTPI

Mr K Gillespie BA (Hons) BPI MLegSc MRTPI
(From October 2021)

Ms M McKearney BSc DipTP MRTPI
(From March 2022)

Ms C McKeary BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI
(From March 2022)

Administrative Team

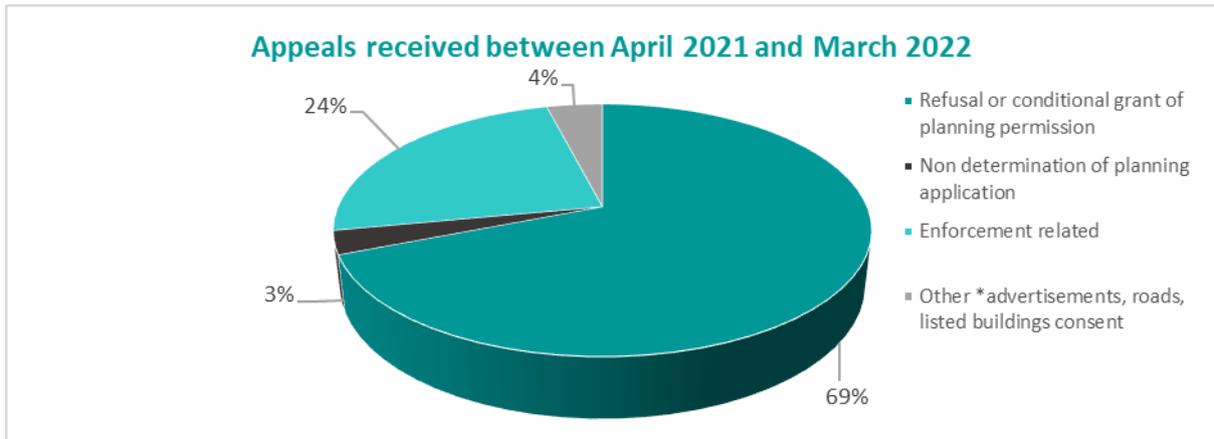
Chief Administrative Officer	Mrs S Hanna
Office Manager	Mrs J O'Connor
Team Leaders	Mr C Morgan
	Mrs L Austin
Case Officers	Miss Y Adgey
	Ms J Millar
	Mr J Nelson
	Mrs R Rodgers
	Mr D O'Neill
	Mr P Dawson
	Miss K McCullough
Administrative Support Officer	Mrs E McShane
IT Project Business Lead	Mrs F Campbell
LDP Senior Manager	Mr C Purvis
Programme Officers	Mr B Fegan
	Mr J Bickerstaff
	Mrs J Lynas

SECTION TWO

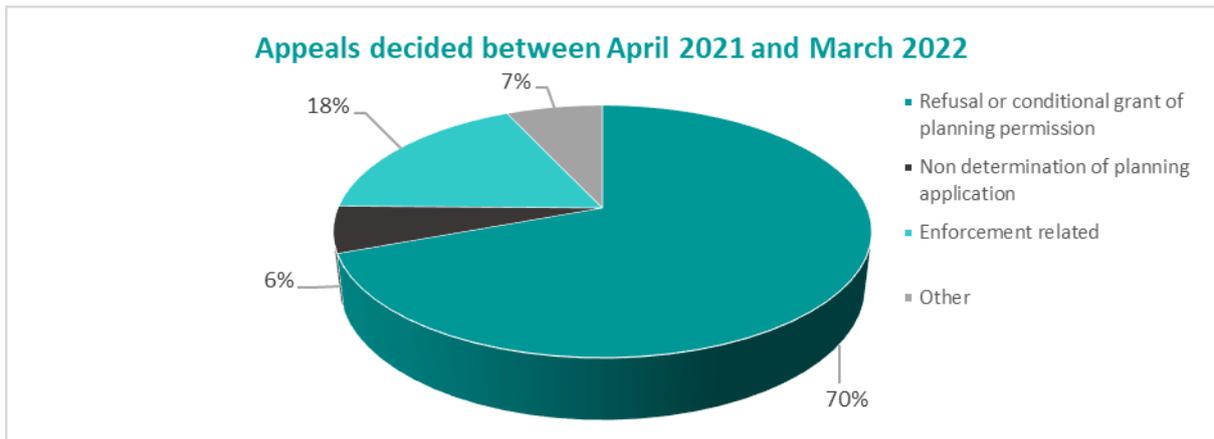
Analysis of casework

Appeals Overview

Appeals received between April 2021 and March 2022



Appeals decided between April 2021 and March 2022



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	2021/22
Refusal or conditional grant of planning permission	221	207	204	215	139	218
Non determination of planning application	4	4	9	9	7	10
Enforcement related	53	53	67	69	56	75
Other *advertisements, roads, listed buildings consent	22	45	43	34	7	12
TOTAL	300	309	323	327	209	315

The number of appeals lodged with the Commission for 2021/22 has returned to pre- Covid levels

Table 2: Appeals decided, by appeal type

Appeal type	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Refusal or conditional grant of planning permission	221	198	179	175	126	99
Non determination of planning application	11	7	1	11	5	8
Enforcement related	36	44	56	51	35	25
Other	28	27	42	40	17	10
TOTAL	296	276	278	277	183	142

In addition to the appeals outlined above, 29 appeals received in 21/22 were subsequently withdrawn and a further 7 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	37	34.6
Multiple housing	21	19.6
Householder	10	9.3
Single dwelling in an urban area	7	6.5
Industry, business and distribution	8	7.5
Agricultural	6	5.6
Retail	4	3.7
Other residential	5	4.7
Houses in multiple occupancy	2	1.9
Tourist accommodation	1	0.9
Other non-residential	4	3.7
Mixed use	2	1.9
TOTAL	107	100%

Single dwellings in the countryside and multiple housing continue to represent the largest number of appeals decided.

Table 4: Appeals allowed, by appeal type

Appeal type	Number decided	Number allowed	Success rate %
Refusal or conditional grant of planning permission	99	29	29%
Non determination of planning application	8	4	50%
Enforcement related	25	14	56%
Other	10	4	40%
TOTAL	142	51	36%

Table 5: Appeals allowed, by procedure

Procedure		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Hearing	Number	128	116	128	99	43	58
	Allowed	40	31	55	44	24	25
	% Allowed	31%	27%	43%	44%	56%	43%
Written representations with accompanied site visit	Number	92	101	92	109	17	0
	Allowed	23	29	26	42	2	0
	% Allowed	25%	29%	28%	39%	12%	0%
Written representations with Commissioner site visit	Number	76	59	58	69	124	84
	Allowed	21	12	20	28	47	26
	% Allowed	28%	20%	34%	41%	38%	31%

The arrangements for Accompanied Site Visits (ASV) put on hold at the start of lockdown remain suspended. Measures for the introduction of remote hearings became operational in May 2020 with physical and hybrid hearings commencing June 2021.

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	4	3	75%
Ards & North Down	3	1	33%
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	8	7	88%
Belfast City	10	7	70%
Causeway Coast & Glens	9	7	78%
Derry City & Strabane	4	2	50%
Fermanagh & Omagh	7	5	71%
Lisburn & Castlereagh	16	12	75%
Mid & East Antrim	13	8	62%
Mid Ulster	1	0	0%
Newry, Mourne & Down	22	18	82%
Northern Ireland	97	70	72%

Table 7: Appeal decisions: median time in weeks

Procedure	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Hearing	29	27	23	28	43	54
Written representations with accompanied site visit	21	21	19	27	35	N/A
Written representations with Commissioner site visit	20	22	20	26	37	48
All decisions median weeks	23	23	21	27	38	50

From the start of Covid the median time taken to process enforcement-related appeals is 58 weeks. The impact of our initial COVID response measure to suspend the submission of evidence between March and June 2020 has affected delivery times by a minimum of 16 weeks. Alternative measures have been introduced to ensure that such delays do not occur in the future. This combined with the resources available due to competing priorities and training have resulted in increased decision making timelines.

Performance Measures: Hear and Decide

We set out in our 20/21 Business Plan that the Commissions' performance measures have been set to ensure that they remain challenging, measurable and focused on the priorities of the users of the Commissions' services. We know they will not be deliverable given the impact of the COVID-19 situation but will remain as a benchmark for service delivery once we become fully operational again.

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 30 % 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
2021/22	338

It is acknowledged that the delivery of appeal decisions has not been to a level that will address business volumes. This is due to a combination of factors namely, the continued impact of the suspension of submission of evidence at the start of the pandemic, hearings being delayed due to appellants preference for physical hearings which recommenced June 2021, diversion of resources to assist on the IT project, timing of appointments to the Commission and a significant amount of the Commissioner cohort remaining in training meaning that the PACWAC has been operating at reduced capacity.

Quality

Table 9: Complaints, received and whether justified

Procedure	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of complaints received	16	17	15	15	4	3
Number of justified complaints	2	3	1 plus 1 partially justified	1 plus 2 partially justified	1	0

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 three complaints received by the Commissions in 2020/21, none were found to be justified.

Table 10: Judicial Reviews

Procedure	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of challenges	6	4	4	3	5	1
Number of successful challenges	2	2	1	2	1	0

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 2021/22 one application for judicial review was made; which remains 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, is two. This means that 99.4% of our decisions are free from challenge demonstrating the Commissions commitment to providing decisions of the highest quality.

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	2021/22
No award	40	29	20	34	11	8
Partial award	4	2	7	6	1	2
Full award	1	10	8	8	1	0
TOTAL	45	41	35	48	13	10

The number of claims for costs decreased further in 21/22. 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		10	
Number of claims for costs received by the PAC (involving planning authority)		10	
	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	0	0	0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	0	0
Belfast City	0	1	1
Causeway Coast & Glens	0	1	1
Derry City & Strabane	1	3	4
Fermanagh & Omagh	0	0	0
Lisburn & Castlereagh	1	1	2
Mid & East Antrim	0	1	1
Mid Ulster	0	0	0
Newry, Mourne & Down	0	1	1
Department for Infrastructure	0	0	0
Northern Ireland	2	8	10

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	0	0	0	0
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	0	0	0	0
Belfast City	0	0	0	0
Causeway Coast & Glens	0	0	0	0
Derry City & Strabane	1	0	0	1
Fermanagh & Omagh	0	0	0	0
Lisburn & Castlereagh	1	0	0	1
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	1	0	0	1
Causeway Coast & Glens	0	1	0	1
Derry City & Strabane	3	0	0	3
Fermanagh & Omagh	0	0	0	0
Lisburn & Castlereagh	0	1	0	1
Mid & East Antrim	1	0	0	1
Mid Ulster	0	0	0	0
Newry, Mourne & Down	1	0	0	1
Department for Infrastructure	0	0	0	0
Northern Ireland	6	2	0	8

Hear and Report

Hear and Report is an area of work which is less predictable and more resource intensive than Hear and Decide casework. The principal elements are public inquiries and hearings into regionally significant and called in planning applications as well as Independent Examinations. In these cases, referrals are made by the Department for Infrastructure to the Commission. The Commissioner will consider the evidence provided 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.

Public Inquiries

Hear and Report is an area of work which is less predictable and more resource intensive than Hear and Decide casework. The principal elements are public inquiries and hearings into regionally significant and called in planning applications as well as Independent Examinations. In these cases, referrals are made by the Department for Infrastructure to the Commission. The Commissioner will consider the evidence provided 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.

Inquiries

[2021/C005, 2021/C006 and 2021/C007, WHR01, WHR02, WHR03 and WHR04 – Gold mine, Tyrone](#)

Requests for public inquiries have been requested by the Department for Infrastructure and the Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. Programming will take place at a later date.

[2021/C0010 – Wind Farm, Gruggandoo](#)

Requests for public inquiries have been requested by the Department for Infrastructure, programming will take place at a later date.

Hearings

2019/C002 – Lands at Ballydrain, Comber

The Commission conducted a hearing and presented a report on the need for an environmental impact assessment during 2021/22.

2019/C003 – Anaerobic Digester Plant, Bready

The Commission conducted a hearing in 2021/22 and will present a report in 2022/23.

2019/C004 – Proposed solar farm, Castlegore

Having conducted hearings in June and July 2021, the Commission presented a report to the Department for Infrastructure during 2021/22.

2019/C006, 2019/C007 and 2019/C008 - Heritage led Mixed Use Development Upperlands, Maghera, County Londonderry

The Commission conducted a hearing in 2021/22 and presented a report to the Department for Infrastructure.

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

The Commission conducted a hearing and presented a report on the need for an environmental impact assessment during 2021/22.

2020/C003 & C004 - Proposed use of land for parking of cars, the Giant's Causeway

The Commission conducted a hearing and presented a report on the need for an environmental impact assessment during 2021/22.

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

A hearing had been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment; hearings will take place in the financial year 2022/23.

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

The Commission conducted a hearing and presented a report on the need for an environmental impact assessment during 2021/22.

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

The Commission conducted a hearing in 2021/22 and will present a report in 2022/23.

2020/C009 – Revocation of outline planning permission, Ballyronan

A hearing has been arranged to take place in 2022/23.

2020/C010 – Quarry, Castlederg

A hearing had been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment; hearings will take place in the financial year 2022/23.

2020/C011 - Quarry, Strabane

A hearing had been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment; hearings will take place in the financial year 2022/23.

2021/C001 – Pig farm, Omagh

A hearing had been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment; hearings will take place in the financial year 2022/23.

2021/C002– Mixed tourist accommodation, Dungiven

The request for a hearing in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment was received in 2021/22.

2021/C003 – Anaerobic digester, Milford

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place at a later date.

2021/C004 – Development at Dunamanagh

The request for a hearing in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment was received and withdrawn in 2021/22.

2021/C008 - Mixed tourist accommodation, Dungiven

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place at a later date.

2021/C009 – Car park, Bushmills

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place at a later date.

2021/C010 – Wind farm, Newry

A hearing has been requested in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment and programming will take place at a later date.

2021/C011 – Use of land for mobile catering and parking, Bushmills

The request for a hearing in relation to the need for an environmental impact assessment was received and withdrawn in 2021/22.

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Local Development Plan Independent Examinations

As at the end of March 2021 the Commission has received five Development Plan Documents for Independent Examination (IE).

- Belfast City Council's Independent Examination is fully completed with the final report submitted to Department for Infrastructure (DfI) September 2021;
- Fermanagh & Omagh ; Lisburn & Castlereagh, Newtownabbey and Mid & East Antrim hearing sessions are due to commence

PACWAC continues to encourage the Councils and the Department to keep the Commission updated on any changes to their timetables and have actively engaged with Councils on administrative matters in relation to the submission of DPDs for independent examination. The Commission has continued to deliver Independent Examinations through remote hearings due to the positive feedback in relation to this platform.

An additional Programme Officer has now been secured for the Local Development Plan team to support our existing colleagues and ensure the continued successful delivery of the Independent Examinations as the number of referrals has increased.

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

This objective was fully achieved.

Water Appeals Commission

Appeals caseload

Table 15: Water appeals

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Water appeals received	5	1	3	2	1	2
Water appeals withdrawn	0	2	2	0	1	1
Water appeals decided	8	1	0	2	0	0
Water appeals in hand	2	0	1	1	0	1

Activity in this area remains at a low level.

SECTION THREE

Financial Statement

Running costs

	2020/21		2021/22	
	£	%	£	%
Commissioners' salaries	1,335,793	68.82	1,546,498	67.43
Administrative staff salaries	334,199	17.22	444,846	19.40
Travel & subsistence	9,881	0.51	7,547	0.33
Accommodation charges	91,346	4.71	79,723	3.48
Advertising	19,136	0.99	27,042	1.18
External training	2,468	0.13	3,965	0.17
Legal fees	40,919	2.11	68,767	3.00
Postage & telephone charges	4,042	0.21	8,540	0.37
Electricity	12,299	0.63	18,544	0.81
Library	9,328	0.48	17,354	0.76
Stationery & printing	4,374	0.22	4,267	0.19
Contract cleaning	11,264	0.58	10,437	0.46
Office equipment	932	0.05	2,102	0.09
Incidental expenses	20,391	1.05	13,844	0.60
Software maintenance contract	41,804	2.15	30,039	1.31
Refund of fees	2,759	0.14	9,846	0.43
TOTAL	1,940,935	100	2,293,361	100

Receipts

	2020/21	2021/22
	£	£
Appeal fees	27,314	65,457
Photocopying charges	0	0
TOTAL	27,314	65,457