

12 December 2011

Dear Consultee

EQUALITY SCHEME AND ACTION PLAN AND DISABILITY ACTION PLAN CONSULTATION

I would like to invite you to participate in the consultation process on the Civil Service Commissioners' Equality Scheme and Action Plan and Disability Action Plan. The draft documents can be accessed from the Commissioners' website via this link:
<http://www.nicscommissioners.org>

Civil Service Commissioners

It may be helpful if I first provide some background to the Commissioners' work. The primary role of the Civil Service Commissioners is to regulate appointments to the NICS to ensure these are made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. Appointments to the NICS must be made in line with the expectations set out in the Recruitment Code. Commissioners may also hear appeals from existing civil servants under the NICS Code of Ethics.

Civil Service Commissioners are independent of Government and the NICS and are appointed on merit following public advertisement and fair and open competition. Commissioners for Northern Ireland were first appointed in 1923 and currently derive their powers and responsibilities from the Civil Service Commissioners (Northern Ireland) Order 1999.

As a public authority, we are committed to fulfilling our obligations to promote equality of opportunity and good relations under Section 75 of, and schedule 9 to, the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and to fulfil our disability duties under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended under the Disability Discrimination Order (NI) 2006). Our Equality Scheme and Action Plan and Disability Action Plan set out how our obligations will be fulfilled.

Responses to Consultation

I very much hope that you will take part in this consultation exercise and let us know your views on our Equality Scheme and Action Plan and Disability Action Plan. Short response documents have been prepared which you may find helpful and can be downloaded from the Commissioners' website via this link:

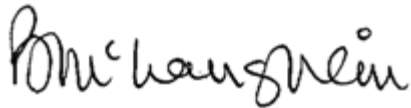
<http://www.nicscommissioners.org>

All responses should be sent to the Office of the Civil Service Commissioners **no later 16 March 2012**, which includes a two week extension to allow for the Christmas period. If you require any of the consultation documents in another format please contact the Equality Officer either by e-mail to

bernie.gray@nio.x.gsi.gov.uk; by telephone on 028 9054 9150; or at the following address:

Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland
5th Floor, Windsor House
Bedford Street
BELFAST
BT2 7SR

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brenda McLaughlin', written in a cursive style.

BRENDA MCLAUGHLIN
Chairperson