# departmental business plan 2011-15

## Introduction

**The Northern Ireland Office is responsible for overseeing the Northern Ireland devolution settlement. Our vision is a stable, peaceful, prosperous, forward-looking, mainstream, ‘normalised’ Northern Ireland. We will achieve this by working through partnerships within Whitehall and with the Northern Ireland Executive, the Irish Government, and all those who share this ambition.**

**We will support the implementation of Coalition Government policies on political reform, and particularly the promise to promote peace, stability and economic prosperity in Northern Ireland. Upholding the commitment set out in the Coalition Programme for Government, we will stand firmly behind the agreements negotiated and the institutions they established.**

**Through membership of the National Security Council, we will coordinate delivery of a comprehensive strategy to deal with the Northern Ireland related terrorist threat.**

**We will work with the Executive to rebalance the Northern Ireland economy and encourage inward investment in Northern Ireland. With other Government departments, we will fulfil the commitments set out in the economic pact, “Building a Prosperous and United Community”.**

**We will continue to represent vigorously Northern Ireland interests at UK Government level and for UK Government interests in Northern Ireland.**

## Business Plan

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Renewed politics**
 | ***Devolved government capable of resolving differences, delivering on its core business, breaking out from old constraints.*** |
|  |   |   |  |
| **ACTIONS** |   | **START** | **END** |
| * 1. **Take forward implementation of the Agreements and cement the stability and success of the political institutions in Northern Ireland**
 |  |  |  |
| * + 1. Continue to fulfil the Government’s role in the implementation of the Agreements and further embedding political stability
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Work with Other Government Departments, including by supporting Devolution Ministers, to ensure that as appropriate Govt policy takes account of NI constitutional and devolution issues and that the NIE has visibility and understanding of UK wide policy
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Work to ensure the Executive is best placed to deliver on key objectives, especially in respect of rebalancing the economy and promoting integration
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Support effective operation of the Joint Ministerial Committee, British Irish Council, British Irish Intergovernmental Secretariat, and Finance Ministers’ Quadrilateral to advance NI interests
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Continue to build trusting relationships through meaningful and strategic engagement with:
			1. The Northern Ireland Executive
			2. Northern Ireland political parties
			3. Community leaders and wider civic society
			4. Partners in Whitehall
			5. The Irish Government
			6. The US
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Implement a clear strategy on handling sensitive anniversaries that sets a positive example and encourages others to show tolerance and mutual understanding
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Work closely with NI Executive on delivering key priorities
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Work closely with NI parties, Irish and US Governments and Haass team in support of all-party talks on flags, parades and the past.
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
|  |  |  |  |
| * 1. **Deliver Coalition Government’s programme for democratic and political renewal in Northern Ireland – including the development of civil liberties and electoral reform**
 |  |  |  |
| * + 1. Work with the Chief Electoral Officer to successfully deliver elections and referendums in 2011
 |  | - | Complete |
| * + 1. Develop and deliver necessary legislative changes in advance of the 2014-15 electoral cycle
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Work with Northern Ireland parties to bring an end to dual mandates
 |  | Started | Complete |
| * + 1. Work, including with colleagues in Whitehall and the UK Bill of Rights Commission, to develop proposals for a UK-wide Bill of Rights, and to take forward protection of additional rights required for and supported within Northern Ireland
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Through sponsorship of the Boundary Commission, implement proposals for a reduction in the number of MPs in Northern Ireland
 |  | Started | Complete[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| * + 1. As appropriate, offer support for devolved institutions’ review of Assembly and Executive
 |  | TBC[[2]](#footnote-2) | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Take forward a Westminster Northern Ireland Bill on electoral and institutional issues reflecting any outcome of the review
 |  | - | Complete |
| * + 1. Work with the devolved Administration and others in fostering the Big Society in Northern Ireland
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Ensure continuation of the Parades Commission until such time as locally-agreed replacement arrangements can be secured
 |  | Started | TBC[[3]](#footnote-3) |
| * + 1. Introduce revised arrangements on confidentiality of political donations in Northern Ireland
 |  | Aug 2011 | Oct 2014 |
| * + 1. Working with Devolved Ministers to help build a "shared future”
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
|  |  |  |  |
| * 1. **Support Royal and other VVIP visits to Northern Ireland, including Irish Presidential and senior Ministerial visits**
 |  |  |  |
| * + 1. Work with the Royal Household, FCO and Irish government to plan and support key visits to Northern Ireland and the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Provide structured and well-planned visits for ministers and others, delegations, including from other Whitehall departments
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Work with NI Departments and Whitehall Department in relation to London 2012 Olympics including planning and supporting of Ministerial visits both in NI and London.
 |  | - | Complete |
|  |  |  |  |
| * 1. **Ensure that we make a positive contribution to dealing with the legacy of the Troubles**
 |  |  |  |
| * + 1. Deliver remaining public inquiries
 |  | Started | TBC[[4]](#footnote-4) |
| * + 1. Work with NI Assembly on determining what role HMG can play in dealing with the past
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Lead the cross-government response to challenging issues from NI’s troubled past, including high profile legal cases.
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
|  iv. Work with NIE departments to ensure that the public are able to access government papers, while ensuring the protection of rights for all. |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
|  |   |   |   |
| **MILESTONES** |  |  |  |
| 1. Publish responses to previous Government’s consultation on a Northern Ireland Bill of Rights
 |  | ­- | Complete |
| 1. Publication of Bloody Sunday Inquiry report
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Publication of Billy Wright Inquiry report
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Publish summary of responses to Consultative Group on the Past
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Successful delivery of NI referendum on UK-Parliament electoral reform
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Successful delivery of Assembly and local government elections in NI
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Publication of Rosemary Nelson Inquiry report
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Publication of Robert Hamill Inquiry report
 |  | TBC[[5]](#footnote-5) |  |
| 1. Publication of Pat Finucane Review report
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Introduction of possible Third Session Northern Ireland Bill
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Boundary Commission to report
 |  | Oct 2013 | Complete[[6]](#footnote-6) |
| 1. End to dual mandates in Northern Ireland
 |  | Apr 2015 |  |
| 1. Pilot and evaluate a shared Parliamentary Service (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland Office)
 |  | June 2011 | Complete |
| 1. Appoint new Chief Commissioner and Commissioners to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and appoint new Chief Commissioner to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
 |  | Started | Sep 2011[[7]](#footnote-7) |
| 1. Appointment of Sentence Review Commissioners
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Appoint new Chair and Civil Service Commissioners
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Appoint new Boundary Commissioner
 |  | July 2014 | Dec 2014 |
| 1. Appoint Parades Commissioners
 |  | - |  Complete[[8]](#footnote-8) |
| 1. Appoint new/re-appoint 7 Commissioners to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
 |  | Dec 2013 | Aug 2014 |
| 1. Appointments to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
* Appoint/re-appoint 4 Commissioners (First term of office ends 21 September 2012)
* Appoint/re-appoint 4 Commissioners (First term of office ends 8 November 2013)
 |  | StartedFeb 2013 | CompleteComplete |
| 1. Appoint new/extend 7 Commissioners to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
 |  | Dec 2013 | Aug 2014 |
| 1. Publication of review Report into Administrative Scheme ‘On the Runs’
 |  | March 2014 | June 2014 |
| 1. Successful delivery of Ministerial Community Outreach Programme
 |  | January 2014 | April 2015 |
| 1. Successful delivery of HMG Programme of Commemorations in Northern Ireland/Ireland
 |  | May 2013 | Apr 2015[[9]](#footnote-9)  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Economy on course to a healthier balance**
 | ***Working with the Northern Ireland Executive, ensure proposals are brought forward, and as appropriate implemented, to rebalance the Northern Ireland economy.*** |
|  |   |   |  |
| **ACTIONS** |   | **START** | **END** |
| * 1. **Work with HM Treasury and the Northern Ireland Executive to bring about the rebalancing of the Northern Ireland economy**
 |  |  |  |
| * + 1. Facilitate a just and fair resolution of Presbyterian Mutual Society Issues
 |  | - | Complete |
| * + 1. With the Treasury and Executive, develop and put to consultation initial proposals on rebalancing the NI Economy including mechanisms for the devolved institutions to alter the rate of Corporation Tax.
 |  | - | Complete |
| * + 1. Agree outcome of consultation and proposals for rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy
 |  | - | Complete |
| * + 1. Support the Devolved Administration in seeking to attract inward investment to Northern Ireland through working with both the Northern Ireland Executive, colleagues in Whitehall, the London Diplomatic Corps and the wider business community.
 |  | - | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Work with Northern Ireland and Whitehall departments to ensure delivery of commitments made in the 'economic pact', Building a Prosperous and United Community .
 |  | June 2013 | Apr 2015 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |   |   |   |
| **MILESTONES** |  |  |  |
| 1. Publication of paper on rebalancing Northern Ireland Economy
 |  | - | Complete |
| 1. Final decision on the potential devolution of corporation tax related powers
 |  | - | Autumn Statement |
| 1. Publication of an update to Parliament and the NI Assembly on progress in delivering measures in the 'economic pact'
 |  | - | June 2014 |
| 1. Hold an Investment Seminar for targeted High Commissions and Embassies in London
 |  | - | Complete |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Threat from terrorism in Northern Ireland reducing, as result of co-ordinated response**
 | ***The remaining violent threat from those against peace and political progress addressed through a co-ordinated response of all key players*** |
|  |   |   |  |
| **ACTIONS**  |   | **START** | **END** |
| * 1. **Work with key partners, including the PSNI and devolved government, to drive down the threat from NI related terrorism**
 |  |  |  |
| * + 1. Participate in Home Office Review of Counter Terrorism legislation
 |  | - | Complete |
| * + 1. Implement Northern Ireland-related aspects of the Home Office Review of Counter-Terrorism Legislation
 |  | Started | Ongoing[[10]](#footnote-10) |
| * + 1. Conduct biennial review of non-jury trial system and implement subsequent decisions
 |  | - | Complete |
| * + 1. Ensure adequate funding in place for PSNI to tackle security threat
 |  | - | Complete |
| * + 1. Provide appropriate protection for those at risk (for example, via the Home Protection Scheme)
 |  | Started | April 2015 |
| * + 1. Coordinate delivery of a comprehensive strategy to tackle the threat from Northern Ireland Related Terrorism
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Work with colleagues across Whitehall to ensure that all proposed counter terrorism legislation takes the position in Northern Ireland into account
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Ensure that effective policies and legislation are in place to allow the threat to be addressed
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Ensure the effective administration of the Secretary of State’s functions under the Remission of Sentences Act and NI Sentences Act
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
|  |   |   |   |
| **MILESTONES** |  |  |  |
| 1. Launch wide-ranging public consultation on non-jury system in 2011
 |  | - | Complete |
| **B.** Publication of final reports of the Independent Monitoring Commission and Independent International Commission on the Decommissioning of Arms |  | - | Complete |
| **C.** Publication of Code of Practice for the exercise of Stop and Search powers under section 44 of Terrorism Act 2000 |  | - | Complete |
| **D.** Publication of Code of Practice for the exercise of powers in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 |  | - | Complete |
| **E.** Publication of annual report by Independent Reviewer of the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007 in autumn each year |  | Annual publication |  |
| **F.** Review the non-jury trial system prior to expiration of the legislation  |  | April 2013 | July 2015 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **A slimmer Northern Ireland Office**
 | ***A slimmer Northern Ireland Office*** ***which lives within its means and maximises the value of its people and resources*** |
|  |   |   |  |
| **ACTIONS** |   | **START** | **END** |
| * 1. **Deliver SR10 efficiency savings and identify other opportunities for savings to ensure that the department lives within annually funded baselines and can deliver Ministerial priorities**
 |  |  |  |
| * + 1. Implement SR10 efficiency plan and review areas of spend to ensure that they remain necessary to meet business objectives
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Work with ALBs to ensure that they deliver SR10 efficiency commitments
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
|  |  |  |  |
| * 1. **Maximise the use of Hillsborough Castle to meet the needs of the Royal Household, public sector and wider community in Northern Ireland**
 |  |  |  |
| * + 1. Support the Royal Household during visits to Northern Ireland
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
| * + 1. Maximise public benefit derived from Hillsborough Castle by public sector and community organisations
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |
|  |   |   |   |
| **MILESTONES** |  |  |  |
| 1. Finalise strategy to maximise use of Hillsborough Castle
 |  | Mar 2012 | Complete |
| 1. Develop and implement an action plan to take forward the strategy for Hillsborough Castle
 |  | Apr 2012 | Mar 2014  |
| 1. Baseline reduced by 25% in line with SR Settlement
 |  | Ongoing  | Mar 2016 |
| 1. Work with the Scotland Office and the Wales Office to consider further opportunities for shared services and develop and implement, as appropriate.
 |  | Started | Apr 2015 |

# Table of spending for 2011/12 to 2014/15[[11]](#footnote-11)

This section sets out the Department’s resource and capital Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) over the Spending Review period, as agreed with HM Treasury.

We have included a table to show the Department’s planned expenditure over the Spending Review period, as agreed with HM Treasury. It is split into money spent on administration (including the cost of running departments themselves), programmes (including the frontline), and capital (for instance new buildings and equipment).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **£’000 (nominal)** | **Baseline 2010/11** | **2011/12** | **2012/13** | **2013/14** | **2014/15** |
| Core Administration | 14,525 | 16,234 | 13,414 | 15,551 | 15,227 |
| Other Resource | 11,351 | 9,535 | 9,613 | 12,448 | 6,356 |
| **Resource DEL**  | **25,876** | **25,769** | **23,027** | **27,999** | **21,583** |
| o/w non-ringfenced resource DEL | 23,718 | 23,707 | 21,131 | 26,1307 | 19,810 |
| o/w depreciation ring-fenced  | 2,158 | 2,062 | 1,896 | 1,869 | 1,773 |
| **Capital DEL** | **440** | **390** | **1,341** | **396** | **241** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. Although the review was completed, legislation brought forward to implement the proposed reductions was not passed by Parliament. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Section 29A of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (“the Act”), as amended by the Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006 requires that a Committee of the Assembly conduct a review of the operation of the provisions contained in the Act relating to the establishment and operation of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Northern Ireland Executive. It will be for the Assembly to set the timetable for conducting this review, though it is required by statute to conclude by 1 May 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The timing for securing a locally-agreed replacement to the Parades Commission rests with the Northern Ireland political parties. 5 new Commissioners appointed on 1 January 2014. These appointments will run until 31 December 2016 or until an alternative, locally agreed solution can be found on parading. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Billy Wright Inquiry, Rosemary Nelson Inquiry and Bloody Sunday Inquiry reports have all been published. The Robert Hamill Inquiry Report has been finalised, though timing for publication continues to be dependent upon the conclusion of ongoing legal proceedings. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Robert Hamill Inquiry Report has been finalised, though timing for publication continues to be dependent upon the conclusion of ongoing legal proceedings. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Although the review was completed, legislation brought forward to implement the proposed reductions was not passed by Parliament. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. A new Chief Commissioner and Commissioners to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission were appointed in September 2011. A new Chief Commissioner to the Equality Commission was appointed with effect from 1 March 2012. .A process is underway with a target of May 2014 to fill the vacancy that arose late last year in the position of Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 5 new Commissioners appointed on 1 January 2014. These appointments will run until 31 December 2016 or until an alternative, locally agreed solution can be found on parading. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. This will be jointly delivered with Irish Government Ministers where appropriate. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. 10Timetable for implementation is driven by the Home Office. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Figures for Core Administration and Other Resource have been updated following Supplementary Estimate process to reflect current budgetary requirements as agreed with HMT. Total Resource DEL figures have been adjusted to reflect pay restraint settlement letter issued by HMT in December 2011. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)