



NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

Seán Brady

[sean@pprproject.org](mailto:sean@pprproject.org)

07.06.23

## Freedom of Information Request

Dear Seán,

I am writing in response to your recent Freedom of Information Request, dated 24 05 2023. Please see below our response to your request. We have included your questions and provided our answers and responses in **bold**.

Has the commission been involved in the comprehensive review process outlined in the Permanent Secretary's correspondence and if so, how?

**The Human Rights Commission (the Commission) has had no formal role in the comprehensive review process. In April 2022 the Department requested a meeting to discuss a project to develop a human rights based approach across the Department. The Department has not engaged with the Commission since April 2022 on this matter. The Commission understands this is due to budgetary constraints and the absence of a Minister.**

In what way is the Department engaging with the commission regarding social security assessments and human rights?

**The Department has not engaged with the Commission on this matter.**

Has the commission made any recommendations to the Department. If so, how have the Department responded?

**The Commission has not provided any recommendations to the Department on this matter.**

**The Commission's 2022 Annual Statement made a number of targeted recommendations to the Department of Communities and to the UK Government regarding the right to an adequate standard of living and to social security. You can view these recommendations from page one 198 of the document [here](#).**

**The Commission's recommendations include:**

**The Department of Work and Pensions should review the entitlement conditions and reverse the cuts in social security benefits introduced by the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 to this end. In the interim, the Commission recommends that the Department for Communities, with support from the NI Executive, implements a comprehensive and secure mitigation package as long as necessary in NI.**

**The Department has not responded to the Commission's Annual Statement recommendations.**

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our response, you should write to David Russell, the Commission's Chief Executive.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

I hope that this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**Claire Martin**

Director of Engagement and Communications

(Communications, Information and Education, Public and Political Affairs)

