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2 May 2013

**EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION – FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT
2013-15**

I am writing to enclose the Framework Document, which was agreed by your Board at its meeting of 27 March 2013. This Framework Document took effect from 1 April 2013.

I am pleased that we have been able to reach agreement of this Framework Document, which protects the EHRC's independence necessary to enable it properly to fulfil its statutory functions, and ensure it is accountable for its performance and use of public funds.

The Government is committed to the EHRC being a strong, effective and independent equalities and human rights body, and to retaining the EHRC's 'A'-rated status as a National Human Rights Institution. I am pleased by recent progress, for example the EHRC's improved financial stewardship, reflected in its last two sets of annual accounts having received clear audit opinions, and for the EHRC's progress in reducing expenditure in line with the Spending Review 2010 settlement. Significant progress has also been made in other areas, including the appointment of a smaller Board, with a greater focus on business and corporate governance skills, to provide strategic leadership for the EHRC. We have also reached agreement on the EHRC's budget for the next two years following the Comprehensive Budget Review.

It is, of course, for the EHRC's Board to determine its priorities and activities, but my vision is for the EHRC to be a valued and respected institution – held in high esteem nationally and internationally for its work to promote and protect equality and human



rights. I want it to be an organisation in which everyone has trust and confidence, because it is there to support fair play and safeguard all of our rights, whoever we are and wherever we are from.

You have advised that the Board's priorities for 2013/14 will be published in your Business Plan. We share the desire of minimising bureaucracy by ensuring that any targets and performance indicators are limited, focussed and useful. The Board will set key performance indicators for the EHRC during 2013/14, which will be published in the EHRC's Business Plan and I would be grateful if you would arrange for my officials to be notified of these in due course.

Alongside these key performance indicators, I know that there are a number of other pieces of performance data that the EHRC has agreed it will collect. I am sending with this letter a copy of the key data sheet summarising the spending review allocation, delegated limits, management information requirements and spend controls for the EHRC over the rest of the Spending Review period. A number of controls which were included in the previous Framework Document will no longer apply to the EHRC, and these are listed in Annex A. My officials will discuss with you any necessary revisions to these key data over the Spending Review period.

May I take this opportunity to thank you, your staff and your Board for continuing to give your time, skills and commitment to the important work of the EHRC. I look forward to continuing our partnership in this exciting year and beyond.



HELEN GRANT

Minister for Women and Equalities
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

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Annex A

Summary of changes to spending controls and other accountability mechanisms: comparison with previous Framework Document

1. **External recruitment** - All non-contentious¹ external recruitment can be authorised by the EHRC's Chief Executive. This replaces the requirement to seek approval from the DCMS for all recruitment from outside of the civil service/ public sector;
2. **Procurement** – a 'procurement delegation' will not be applicable, meaning that the EHRC will no longer need to seek agreement to purchase goods and services, subject to its adherence to the necessary financial controls;
3. **Advertising and marketing spend** - the EHRC will submit a year-plan providing an overview of anticipated spend, which will enable approval to be given upfront and require no further recourse to the DCMS. Where opportunities for reactive or unplanned communications arise, EHRC will present a business case for any necessary further spend;
4. **Parliamentary Questions** – The DCMS and the EHRC will agree in spring 2013 a protocol detailing where the EHRC will answer Parliamentary Questions directly via correspondence, rather than via the Minister;
5. **Review** – The DCMS agrees to review any controls in this Framework Document if, in practice, the EHRC considers that such controls prevent the EHRC from discharging its statutory functions.

¹ The definition of non-contentious in recruitment is when the following have all been met:

- Where a clear business need has been identified requiring staffing, deeming the post as business critical and/or frontline service delivery.
- The Chief Executive approves the recruitment of the post and confirms that the post cannot be filled from the wider public sector workforce.