

The Charity Commission is to receive new funding and powers

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The Commission is set to receive 9 million pounds of additional funding to help it focus on its monitoring and enforcement work and anticipates receiving from the draft Protection of Charities Bill many of the powers it has proposed.

Up to 8 million pounds has been promised to the Commission by the Treasury over three years from 2014/2015. This funding is intended to help the Commission free up capacity for more proactive monitoring and enforcement work. By investing in technology to digitise its services in respect of low risk transactions and by developing systems that will assemble, analyse and consolidate risk profiles, the Commission will be able to streamline its regulatory processes and focus on more high risk work.

A further 1 million pounds will be added to the Commission's general funding to address immediate gaps in resources required for investigation, monitoring and enforcement.

Separately, the Commission has long sought powers that would enable it to act swiftly and proportionately to combat the mismanagement and abuse of charities. It previously contributed proposals for legislative change to the Review of the Charities Act 2006 led by Lord Hodgson and also to the Prime Minister's Extremism Task Force.

The draft Protection of Charities Bill captures some of these proposals. Specifically, it changes the ways individuals can be disqualified from acting as charity trustees and includes powers to issue official warnings, which will enable the Commission to take formal but not disproportionately forceful steps with regard to charities about which it has concerns.

According to the Commission's statement, it intends to play an active role in the pre-legislative scrutiny of the bill and is hopeful that further powers are included during this process. Its previous proposals have included more preventative powers and extending the list of roles within a charity from which individuals may be disqualified.