

CONSUMERS, ESTATE AGENTS AND REDRESS ACT 2007

EXPLANATORY NOTES

TERRITORIAL EXTENT AND TERRITORIAL APPLICATION

Northern Ireland

Part 1: the National Consumer Council

Section 6: General provision about functions

41. *Section 6* sets out some general requirements the Council must comply with when exercising its functions.
42. *Subsection (2)* requires the Council to have regard to the forward work programme published under section 5.
43. *Subsections (4) and (5)* require the Council to consider the needs of specified groups of vulnerable consumers, although the Council's ability to consider consumers' interests is not limited to these groups.
44. *Subsections (6) and (7)* require the Council to use its resources efficiently, and to consider whether there is another public body with similar functions to the Council. This is to avoid duplicating work.
45. *Subsection (8)* requires the Council to exercise its functions in the manner which it considers is best calculated to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Functions are defined in section 41 as including the Council's powers and duties.
46. *Subsection (9)* provides that the Council is not under an obligation to act for an individual consumer, other than when it is approached by a consumer who is facing disconnection from his or her energy supply. This is because the main role of the Council is to act on behalf of all consumers, as opposed to dealing with individual complaints, which is the proper role of Consumer Direct (the consumer advice service supported by the OFT) and the redress schemes (either those already in existence, or those created under the powers in this Act).