

23

July 2015

Re: Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015

Dear Local Authority Member

The Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 (the Act) has recently been enacted by the Oireachtas. It is the intention of the Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform, Mr. Brendan Howlin, T.D. to commence its operation on **1 September 2015**.

The Act provides that the Standards in Public Office Commission (the Standards Commission) will establish and maintain an online Register of Lobbying and oversee compliance with the legislative provisions. I understand that the Standards Commission has been in contact with you recently in this regard. As you may be aware the purpose of the Register is to make information available to the public on the identity of those communicating with “designated public officials” on specific policy, legislative matters or prospective decisions. Lobbyists will have to register with the Standards Commission and will be required to submit returns of their lobbying activities three times a year.

“Designated Public Officials” or “The Lobbied” - Section 6 of the Act

Section 6(1) of the Act provides that the following persons shall be regarded as Designated Public Officials or “the lobbied” for the purposes of the Act

- a) Ministers and Ministers of State,
- b) Members of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann,
- c) Members of the European Parliament for constituencies in the State,
- d) Members of local authorities,
- e) Special Advisers appointed under section 11 of the Public Service Management Act,
- f) Public servants of a prescribed description,
- g) Any other prescribed office holders or description of persons.

In relation to local authorities the Minister is preparing regulations which will provide that any persons in positions in local authorities in respect of which the maximum salary is €100,348 or higher are prescribed as designated public officials. This will bring the following local authority grades within the scope of the Act from 1st September next:

- Chief Executive Officers and equivalent grades,
- Directors of Services and equivalent grades.

I would ask that you bring this letter to the attention of Directors of Service, Heads of Finance and equivalent grades in your authority.

Further information regarding the legislation and guidelines on the Act are available on the Regulation of Lobbying website www.lobbying.ie . In addition, further information may also be obtained by contacting the Standards Commission at info@lobbying.ie or at 01-639 5722.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Watt", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Robert Watt
Secretary General
Department of Public Expenditure & Reform