

Ms Bernie Orr

Local Government Reform Unit

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

7-9 Merrion Row,

D.2

26th September 2016

Re: Review of the operation of the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015.

Dear Ms. Orr

I refer to the above, and set out the response from Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council's executive below:

1. Positive features of the Act.
It is extremely positive and important that lobbying activities are documented, recorded and made available to the public. This should ensure an environment of transparent and correct interactions between persons and organisations engaged in lobbying activities and the designated public officials.
2. Does the Act fulfil the objectives it set out to achieve.
The Act fulfils the objectives, but there are a number of amendments that would enhance and improve the scope and reach of the objectives- see 5 below
3. Have any unintended consequences occurred, in your view.
I am not aware of any unintended consequences.
4. Do you think the Act can be improved in any way, and how
The act can be improved by the suggested changes in 5 below.
5. What suggestions for changes, if any, would you make

The designated public officials in Local Government are the Chief Executives and Directors of Services. In the sector planning and development duties and responsibilities are delegated to and conducted by levels below CE and DOS, and the current lobbying requirements do not capture or cover activities and engagements at these levels.

The Ethical framework for the local government service, as prescribed in the Local Government Act 2001, includes amongst other requirements, the obligation on prescribed staff to complete annual declarations of interest, and also the disclosure of declarable and beneficial interests. The levels/grades of staff are prescribed in the Local Government Act 2001 (Part 15) Regulations 2015.

In the interest of consistency of approach the expansion of the Lobbying Act, to include as designated public officials all staff prescribed under the 2015 regulations should be considered.

Yours sincerely,

Tom McHugh
Deputy Chief Executive
Director of Corporate, Communications and Governance.