



Northern Ireland

**Local Government**

**Commissioner for Standards**

Annual Report

**2016 | 2017**

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ANNUAL REPORT  
of the  
Northern Ireland  
Local Government Commissioner  
for Standards  
2016-17

Presented to the Assembly pursuant to Part 9 of the  
Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014..



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## Foreword from the Commissioner

**Welcome to the Annual Report of the Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards for the reporting period 2016-17. As Commissioner I am responsible for investigating and adjudicating on written complaints that councillors have breached the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors (the Code). I am required to report on my functions and to lay this report before the Northern Ireland Assembly in pursuance of the provisions of Part 9 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.**



Foreword  
from the Commissioner

### My Role

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 (the 2014 Act) introduced a new ethical standards framework for local government in Northern Ireland. This framework is based on a mandatory Code of Conduct, issued by the former Department of the Environment. The Code specifies principles and rules that govern the conduct expected of councillors

The Code was approved by the Northern Ireland Assembly on 27 May 2014. Parts 1 to 8 of the Code came into effect immediately. Part 9 of the Code ('Application of the Code in relation to planning matters') came into force on 1 April 2015.

In regulating and promoting ethical standards for councillors in Northern Ireland my aim is to ensure councillors achieve standards of conduct that the public expect. The Code supports good governance and decision-making in local government. Its purpose is to ensure the proper use of council resources and maintain public trust and confidence in local government.

As my resources are limited it is important that I focus on the investigation of complaints about significant matters which are central to the relationship between councillors and the public they serve.

The 2014 Act provides for statutory guidance to be developed by my Office to inform councillors about the conduct required by the Code.

### The proposed Revised Code of Conduct

In December 2016 the Department for Communities (which assumed responsibility for Local Government standards when it was established in May 2016) issued a draft revision of the Code for consultation. This followed a Departmental Review of Part 3 (Principles) and Part 8 (Decision Making) of the Code. The review was carried out in response to a revised Code of Conduct of the Northern Ireland Assembly approved on 23 June 2015. The Review also addressed concerns raised by councillors that the rules on decision-making were so restrictive that they did not allow councillors to act fully in their role as public representatives.



I submitted my comments on the proposed revisions to the Code on 28 February 2017 and will continue to contribute fully to further consultation or discussion on the revised Code.

## Alternative Action

The 2014 Act provides for me to take action 'instead of', or 'in addition to', conducting an investigation, to deal with an alleged breach of the Code. I am committed to providing an alternative resolution of complaints where it is in the public interest to do so in place of or in addition to an investigation.

On 21 June 2016 I published my Alternative Actions Policy which aims to bring about a satisfactory resolution of a complaint without the cost and resource implications of an investigation and/or adjudication. This policy is intended to encourage compliance with the Code of Conduct and to demonstrate my commitment to promoting ethical conduct in applying the policy.

It means I can address minor breaches of the Code in a proportionate and appropriate manner. The Alternative actions I may consider where appropriate in a particular case include:

- reminder of obligations under the Code
- apology to the complainant or the public at large
- rectification
- disclosure to another body
- training on the Code
- mediation.

In 2016-17 two complaints against councillors were resolved by the implementation of my Alternative Actions Policy. A summary of one of these cases can be found on page 15.

## Adjudication Hearings

In September 2016 the first public Adjudication hearing into the conduct of a councillor took place in Downpatrick. Since then two further hearings (on unrelated matters) have concluded in Coleraine in November 2016 and June 2017. In September 2016, in advance of the first adjudication, I published my Adjudications Procedures and Sanctions Guidelines on my website. These procedures embody my commitment to fairness, transparency and on serving the public interest.

I excluded myself from adjudicating on these first adjudication cases as, prior to my appointment as Commissioner, I was the Deputy Commissioner and had overall responsibility for the investigation of standards complaints while these cases were under investigation. As Commissioner I have the power to delegate any function under Schedule 1, paragraph 5(8b) of the Public Services Ombudsman Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. I decided to appoint Mr Ian Gordon OBE as Acting Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards ('the Acting Commissioner') to



adjudicate on these cases. Ian Gordon is a former Convenor of the Standards Commission for Scotland and has extensive experience in adjudicating on standards complaints.

## Promoting compliance with the Code

During 2016-17 reporting year my Office engaged widely with stakeholders to promote understanding of the Code and its requirements, and to promote the lessons arising from the casework to date. I and my staff delivered a number of presentations to councillors in Belfast, Omagh, Coleraine, and Lisburn. In October and November 2016 I was welcomed as speaker at planning matters refresher training events provided by the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA). My staff also participated in a working group which assisted NILGA in preparing the Councillors' Guide to the Northern Ireland Planning System published in May 2016. I consider training essential for councillors to ensure their proper adherence to the principles and rules of the Code.

In November 2016, due to a number of complaints received as a result of comments made by councillors on social media, I decided to conduct a survey of members' use of social media. Seventy five councillors completed the survey.

The survey results indicated that;

- on social media sites most councillors identify themselves as a councillor (92% of those responding)
- the majority of councillors access social media on devices provided by their Council (59% of those responding)
- Most councillors (74%) do not have separate social media accounts for their work as councillors.
- Over a quarter of councillors (27%) do not know how to restrict access to the social media sites they use and over half (57%) do not use any 'privacy setting' to restrict access to sites they use in their private life.

Survey results showed that a fifth of respondent councillors had posted comments online which they later regretted and a few (7% of respondents) had made a comment for which they had considered apologising. In addition, most councillors (80% of respondents) stated that they would welcome training on the use of social media in compliance with the Code of Conduct. Many also wanted guidance on their personal safety and security online.

I have responded to this call for training and guidance by producing a publication 'Guidance for Councillors on Social media and the Code' which was published in October 2017.

My Office has continued to develop a separate section of the NIPSO website ([www.nipso.org.uk/nilgsc](http://www.nipso.org.uk/nilgsc)) providing detailed information and guidance on my functions to both complainants and councillors. In 2017-18 I intend to make available online video presentations which will explain to complainants and councillors



how complaints are assessed and investigated and will introduce the procedure followed at adjudication hearings.

## Working with Other Regulatory Bodies

My Office has also engaged extensively in 2016-17 with senior representatives from other oversight bodies including the Local Government Auditor, the Information Commissioner, the Office of the Irish Ombudsman, the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, the Standards Commission for Scotland, and the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland. My staff and I have also continued to benefit from a productive working relationship with officials in the Department for Communities in matters relating to ethical standards legislation and policy.

In September 2015 I concluded a Memoranda of Understanding with the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland and the Local Government Auditor to support our respective roles in regulating standards in local government. I am currently revisiting this Memorandum to reflect the additional powers to consult and share information which were provided for in the Public Services Ombudsman Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. I intend to develop further similar protocols with regulatory bodies whose remit includes local government matters.

## Conclusion

I would like to thank Liam Hannaway and David Jackson, the Chief Executives of Newry Mourne and Down District Council and Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council respectively, and their staff, for the assistance provided in facilitating the Adjudication Hearings conducted in 2016-17. This was a new function for the Office and their professional and co-operative approach to the adjudication hearings was of great assistance to my staff.

I wish to express my thanks in particular to Ian Gordon OBE who conducted these early and significant Adjudication Hearings in an exemplary manner. His clear and balanced written decisions will provide an invaluable model for future adjudications.

Finally I wish to thank the Deputy Commissioner and his staff in the Local Government Ethical Standards Directorate for their work in progressing assessments and investigations while developing guidance for councillors and promoting the Code.

*Marie Anderson*

**Marie Anderson**  
**Local Government Commissioner for Standards**





## Section One

### Deputy Commissioner's report

In 2016-17 the Office received 34 complaints that councillors had breached the Code. These involved a total of 31 councillors, fewer than 7% of the total 462 councillors in Northern Ireland.

These 34 complaints compare to 33 complaints received in 2015-16. The largest number of complaints related to allegations that councillors had failed to meet their obligations as a councillor (19 complaints) including the requirement to act lawfully and the requirement not to bring the position of councillor or the council into disrepute.

There were 15 allegations that a councillor had failed to show respect and consideration for others. It is interesting to note that a number of these complaints resulted from councillors' use of social media. For the first time since the Code came into operation a number of complaints were received alleging councillors had failed to comply with the rules relating to the declaration of interests (6 complaints), lobbying (3 cases) and planning matters (2 cases).

Including complaints brought forward from 2015-16, 23 complaints were completed during the year. A total of six investigations were concluded in 2016-17. In two of these cases a finding of no failure to comply with the Code was made. A further two cases were resolved by use of the Commissioner's Alternative Action Policy and two cases were referred to the Acting Commissioner for adjudication.

Both adjudication hearings resulted in a decision that the councillor concerned had failed to comply with the Code and sanctions were applied (see the Case Studies on pages 17 and 18 for a summary of the Acting Commissioner's decisions in these cases).

A detailed statistical breakdown of all complaints can be found in Section 2 of this report.



## Investigations

In order to maintain an appropriate separation of the investigative and adjudication functions, the Commissioner has delegated the authority to conduct investigations to the Deputy Commissioner and his staff in the Local Government Ethical Standards Directorate (LGES).

The LGES Directorate is a small team comprising a Director of Investigations, two Senior Investigating Officers and an Administrative Officer.

### How complaints are investigated

Complaints that a councillor has or may have failed to comply with the Code must be made in writing. Anonymous complaints are not normally investigated.

All complaints are assessed by LGES to determine:

- **Can it investigate?** Is there a complaint in writing against a named councillor and does that complaint relate to conduct covered by the Code?
- **Should it investigate?** Is there evidence of conduct which, if proven, indicates a breach of the Code and would an investigation be in the public interest?

Each complaint is assessed, with the aim of determining within 4 weeks of receiving it if an investigation is warranted. In 2016-17 this key performance indicator (KPI) was met in 93% of complaints.

A key determining factor to decide whether a complaint should be investigated is therefore;

- The supporting evidence provided by the person who has complained must indicate conduct by the councillor, which if proven to have occurred, may be considered to constitute a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct. The requirement for supporting evidence ensures that vexatious, malicious or frivolous complaints will not be investigated.

In the following example LGES decided that one of the factors in not taking the case for investigation was that there was a lack of evidence to support the complaint;



## Case Study

### Planning complaint not investigated due to lack of evidence presented by complainant

A member of the public complained that a councillor had used his position on a Council Planning committee to give preferential treatment to a planning applicant. As evidence the complainant stated that he believed another individual had seen the planning applicant attempt to shake the hand of the councillor following a Planning Committee meeting.

In assessing the complaint the LGES directorate believed it highly unlikely that evidence from a witness to the interaction would be sufficient to prove that a breach of the Code of Conduct occurred.

As this was the only evidence presented, even if it was proved to have occurred, LGES considered that it would not indicate that the councillor did anything wrong.

The complaint was closed as there was no evidence to support the allegations made.

In determining whether an investigation (or adjudication) is in the public interest, LGES consider the following factors:

- **Seriousness:** the more serious the alleged breach, the more likely it is that an investigation is required;
- **Proportionality:** the cost of an investigation, and any adjudication, is a relevant factor when making an overall assessment of the public interest, especially where these costs could be regarded as excessive when weighed against any likely sanction.

The following cases are examples of where a decision was made not to proceed to adjudication:



## Case Study

### Councillor's Facebook posts did not breach Code

A complaint was made against a member of a council's planning committee for Facebook posts he made in relation to a planning application. The complainant alleged that the councillor had shown himself not to be objective in the matter by using his posts to criticise objectors to the application, and was therefore in breach of the Code of Conduct.

The Respect principles of the Code require that individuals should not be 'subjected to unreasonable and excessive personal attack', and that a councillor 'must not make public statements about a pending decision or state (their) intention to vote in a particular way before the committee meeting has taken place'.

The posts were reviewed by the LGES directorate, who found no evidence that the comments amounted to the councillor being disrespectful to any individual nor that the posts contained any evidence that the councillor held a pre-determined view on the planning application.

The case was therefore not considered for investigation.



## Case Study

### **Councillor did not breach Code following receipt of payments as an MLA**

The Local Government Ethical Standards directorate investigated a complaint that a former member of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council received council funds which he was not entitled to after he took up his new post as an MLA.

The complainant provided a copy of a newspaper article in which the councillor admitted to receiving payments for council duties even though he had become an MLA three weeks previously.

Investigators obtained copies of emails between the complainant and the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland. In these the Electoral Office confirmed that a person is not allowed to act as both a councillor and an MLA at the same time.

Statements were also obtained from the councillor, the Chief Executive of the Council and staff of the Electoral Office. A review of the evidence was undertaken, which included telephone recordings, minutes of relevant meetings and email correspondence.

The available evidence demonstrated that the agreed position following the conversations between the councillor and the Electoral Office was that he would resign from the council the day before taking his seat at the Assembly.

The councillor initially followed the advice provided by the Electoral Office and submitted his letter of resignation to the council, signing the Assembly Roll of Membership the next day.

Despite this agreed appropriate course of action and having initially acted upon it by resigning, the councillor contacted the Council ten days later to extend his date of resignation by a further nine days. As a result of his decision to change his resignation date he obtained approximately £600 in member allowances. Although repaid in full a number of weeks later, it was money the councillor was not entitled to receive.

However, the investigation confirmed that as the initial resignation date held, he was not officially a councillor during the time he received the allowances and was therefore not subject to the requirements of the Code.



The LGES directorate is mindful of the following when carrying out its work:

- **That investigations are conducted in private;**  
The confidentiality of the investigation is a requirement of the 2014 Act. This is necessary to protect the reputation of those complained of and the integrity of the investigation process.
- **That the investigation and adjudication process is fair and transparent;**  
This requires that councillors are made aware of the allegations against them at the outset. Fair process also requires that councillors or their representatives are afforded an opportunity, at each stage of the process, to make representations to this Office and to provide evidence to the investigation.

Where the outcome of an investigation is that the Commissioner should adjudicate on the matter investigated, councillors have an opportunity to comment on the draft investigation report prior to the conclusion of the investigation and to have those comments considered before the report is finalised.

- **That the investigation is completed within a reasonable period of time.**  
Timely completion of the investigation is dependent on a number of factors, including the complexity of the complaint, the availability and timely submission of relevant evidence, and the extent to which the councillor and other relevant witnesses co-operate with the investigation.

The LGES directorate is a small team managing this workload. Therefore the total number of investigations ongoing at any one time can affect the overall timescale of individual cases.

LGES aims to complete the investigation of a complaint within 48 weeks of the date the councillor and the complainant were notified of the decision to conduct an investigation. In 2016-17 this key performance indicator was met in 88% of complaints investigated. The Commissioner intends to continue to keep this KPI target under review.

## Alternative Actions

The Alternative Actions Policy was published in June 2016.

Its purpose is to seek a satisfactory resolution of a complaint without the cost and resource implications of an investigation and/or an adjudication. The Alternative Actions are also intended to encourage compliance with the Code of Conduct and to deal with potential breaches of the Code in a proportionate and appropriate manner.

For instance, Alternative Action may be appropriate where a complaint has arisen as a result of a breakdown in working relationships between a councillor and a senior officer in the Council and such action may assist in restoring working relationships.

The following summarises a case which was resolved by Alternative Action in March 2017:



## Case Study

### **Alderman issues apology for alleged verbal abuse and threats**

A complaint about the actions of an Alderman from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council was resolved via alternative resolution after the Alderman agreed to apologise to a fellow councillor.

Alderman Jim Dillon, from Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, made the public apology following allegations that he made physical threats and verbally abused the councillor at a council function in March 2016.

The event, organized by the Council to recognize and celebrate local business innovation, was attended by around 360 guests, including the former First Minister Mrs Arlene Foster and a number of local councillors.

In a complaint to the Commissioner the Councillor alleged that he saw the Alderman in the area where the drinks reception was being held and approached him in order to shake his hand. He said that the Alderman refused to shake hands, swore at him and then threatened him with violence.

The Councillor described the remarks as "deeply offensive, disrespectful and upsetting", and provided the names of other Councillors who were at the event and observed the impact it had upon him.

The witnesses, the Alderman and the Councillor were all interviewed by the investigating officer in order to establish whether the Alderman's behaviour breached the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

The Code states that Councillors must show respect and consideration for others and not engage in any form of behaviour which may be interpreted as bullying or harassment.

The Councillor referred to a previous committee meeting in which both he and the Alderman had attended, and suggested that the Alderman may have held some form of grudge against him in respect to how a planning proposal had concluded.

Following a review of the evidence the investigation concluded that, on the balance of probabilities, the Alderman had verbally abused and threatened the Councillor and that the matter should be taken to a formal Hearing in front of the Commissioner.

However, before the Hearing both parties requested time to explore an alternative resolution of the complaint. The outcome was that the Alderman accepted the conclusion of the investigation report and made a public apology to the complainant during a meeting of Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council.



## Adjudications

The purpose of an investigation, as set out at section 55(5) of the 2014 Act, is to determine which of the following three findings is appropriate:

- (a) that there is no evidence of any failure to comply with the code of conduct;
- (b) that no action needs to be taken in respect of the matters which are the subject of the investigation;
- (c) that the Commissioner should make an adjudication on the matters which are the subject of the investigation.

Where the Deputy Commissioner determines that the appropriate finding is that the Commissioner should make an adjudication, the Deputy Commissioner will make a referral to the Commissioner.

In special circumstances, for example where there is a potential conflict of interest, the Commissioner may appoint a suitable person (excluding the Deputy Commissioner and staff of the LGES Directorate) to adjudicate at a Hearing. In 2016-17 the Commissioner appointed Mr Ian Gordon to adjudicate on two matters which went to a Hearing.

At the Hearing the Deputy Commissioner or his representative will be invited to make submissions as to why, on the facts found, the Commissioner should decide that the Respondent has failed to comply with the Code. The Respondent or their representative will be given the opportunity of responding to those submissions.

At the conclusion of an Adjudication Hearing the Commissioner may consider whether there has been a failure to comply with the Code. She will then decide that either;

- no action should be taken
- the Respondent should be censured, which may involve the Commissioner issuing a warning as to the Respondent's future conduct
- the Respondent should be suspended, or partially suspended for a period not exceeding one year
- the Respondent should be disqualified from being councillor for a period not exceeding five years.

Further guidance on sanctions can be found on our website at [www.nipso.org.uk](http://www.nipso.org.uk)

The following two cases went for Adjudication in 2016/17:





## Case Study

### **Councillor disqualified for three years following conviction for criminal offences**

Councillor Patrick Clarke from Newry, Mourne and Down District Council was disqualified from being a councillor for three years after a ruling by the Acting Commissioner that his court conviction for fraud, criminal damage and a sexual offence brought the council into disrepute.

The Local Government Ethical Standards Directorate investigated the case after receiving a complaint from another councillor following Councillor Clarke's conviction in court. The evidence gathered was submitted for Adjudication.

The Hearing was held in public at Downshire Civic Centre on 20 October 2016. Councillor Clarke was represented at the Hearing by his legal representative, who confirmed that the councillor accepted he had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct.

The Acting Commissioner considered what would be an appropriate sanction. He took into account mitigating factors that the councillor had cooperated during the investigation and had accepted he had breached the code.

However, there were a number of undisputed aggravating factors. These included that over a five year period councillor Clarke;

- Defrauded the Housing Association and a community association of £750 of public money, thereby deliberately seeking personal or political gain at the public expense by exploiting his position as a councillor
- Committed three separate incidents of criminality, spread out over the course of a year, including criminal damage and possession of an offensive weapon with intent to commit burglary
- Committed a sexual offence
- Showed a lack of reflection and insight throughout the majority of the investigation

The Acting Commissioner considered that this case was about maintaining public confidence in local government. He believed that the conduct was so serious that a sanction greater than a censure or suspension would be appropriate. He ruled that the councillor's behaviour fundamentally breached the Code and had the capacity to undermine the trust between the public and their elected representatives.

He was therefore disqualified from holding office for three years.



## Case Study

### Unauthorised display of flags in council chamber leads to ban for councillor

A councillor from Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council was suspended for three months after displaying an Irish tricolour and a Palestinian flag in the Council Chamber in Coleraine.

A complaint was made to the Local Government Commissioner for Standards after a photograph of Councillor Padraig McShane appeared in three local newspapers. Mr McShane appeared in the photograph with the flags alongside a colleague and a visitor from Gaza.

The complainant stated that displaying the flags in the Chamber was a contentious act which had damaged the reputation of the Council. He also complained that the councillor had abused the trust of the Mayor who had given him permission to show the visitor around the Chamber.

After an investigation by the Local Government Ethical Standards Directorate the case was forwarded to be heard by the Acting Commissioner at a full Adjudication.

The Acting Commissioner established the following:

- That the councillor had no approval from the Mayor or council officials to use the Chamber for the purpose of a photo opportunity involving the display of flags
- That the photograph was taken with the knowledge or approval of the councillor
- That on the balance of probabilities the photograph was provided to the press by the councillor

In defence of his actions Councillor McShane cited Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which permits freedom of expression. He stated that he was merely expressing the views of his constituents.

However, the Acting Commissioner noted that Article 10 also brings with it duties and responsibilities and that the councillor was aware of the sensitive issue of flags and emblems in Northern Ireland.

He judged that the councillor's actions were deliberate and likely to cause controversy. In this regard they brought the role of councillor and the Council into disrepute and breached the Code of Conduct.

Councillor McShane was suspended for three months.



## Section Two

### Statistical Analysis

Code of Conduct Caseload (at 31 March)	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Written complaints received in year	34	33	14
Additional complaints b/f from previous year	9	9	0
Total complaints considered in year	43	42	14
Closed at Validation Stage - "can we investigate?"	2	13	3
Closed at Assessment Stage - "should we investigate?"	15	16	2
Closed at Investigation Stage - no breach	2	3	0
Closed by Alternative Action	2	0	0
Closed at Adjudication	2	0	0
Complaints withdrawn	0	1	0
Live complaints - under assessment	7	4	5
Live complaints - under investigation	12	5	4
Live complaints - referred for adjudication	1	0	0

Written Complaints Received	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	6	2	2
Ards and North Down Borough Council	4	2	0
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council	0	1	4
Belfast City Council	11	4	1
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	3	6	0
Derry City and Strabane District Council	1	6	2
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	2	2	0
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	2	1	0
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council	2	2	3
Mid Ulster District Council - Dungannon	0	3	0
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	3	4	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>14</b>



## Section Two

### Statistical Analysis

<b>Basis of Complaint</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
Obligations as a Councillor: <i>act lawfully and not bring position of councillor/council into disrepute</i>	19	23	13
Behaviour towards other people: <i>to show respect; not to bully or harass</i>	15	18	10
Use of Position	2	2	1
Disclosure of Information	7	1	3
Decision-making	1	0	3
Use of Council Resources	0	5	0
Registration of Interests	3	0	0
Disclosure and Declaration of Interests	6	0	0
Lobbying and access to councillors	3	0	0
Planning matters	2	0	0
<b>Total (&gt;number of complaints as some complaints refer to more than one alleged breach)</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>30</b>



## LGES Funding and Expenditure in 2016-17

The functions of the Northern Ireland Local Government Commissioner for Standards, including the conduct of investigations and adjudications, and the development and review of associated guidance and procedures, are collectively termed "Local Government Ethical Standards" (LGES). LGES is funded from a separate ring-fenced portion of the overall annual budget for the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

This ring-fenced budget is proactively managed over the course of each financial year to ensure that any emerging funding pressures are identified and addressed. Similarly, where reduced requirements arise, under established arrangements with the Department for Communities (DfC), any such amounts are released back to the Department of Finance by NIPSO in accordance with normal in-year financial monitoring procedures. Where applicable a final end of year adjustment is also returned directly to DfC. In either case the amounts returned are made available for redeployment by DfC, thus ensuring that any unspent amounts are utilised elsewhere across Local Government.

The following summarises the audited expenditure on LGES during 2016-17, as reported in NIPSO's 2016-17 Annual report and Accounts:

2016-17 (All £k)	Local Gov't Ethical Standards (LGES)
<i>Staff Costs</i>	203
<i>Other Administration Costs</i>	88
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>291</b>



Notes







Northern Ireland

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Commissioner for Standards**

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