



**The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland**

## **Publication Scheme**

**(as required under the Freedom of Information Act 2000)**

**February 2025**

## **CONTENTS PAGE**

1.	BACKGROUND	1
2.	NOTES ON USING THE SCHEME	2
3.	REQUESTING INFORMATION	3
4.	CHARGING AND COPYRIGHT ISSUES	4
5.	EXEMPT INFORMATION	5
6	COMPLAINTS/ REVIEW PROCEDURE	6
7.	CLASSES OF INFORMATION	6
7.1	Who we are and what we do	7
7.2	What we spend and how we spend it	8
7.3	What our priorities are and how we are doing	9
7.4	How we make decisions	10
7.5	Our policies and procedures	12
7.6	Lists and registers	13
7.7	The services we offer	14

## **1. BACKGROUND**

Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland (the Commission) is an executive non-departmental public body established under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972. Its powers were later extended under the Housing Orders (Northern Ireland) 1976 and 1981, and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1992. Initially sponsored by the Department of the Environment, the Commission is currently sponsored by the Department for Communities.

Without prejudice to the general purpose of the Commission's main functional areas are outlined in Section 40, sub-section 4, paragraph (a) – (f) of the Local Government Act as follows:-

### **(a) Advisory Appointment Panels**

Establishing, in such manner as the Commission thinks fit, bodies (to be known as "advisory appointment panels") for the purpose of giving advice to Councils and the NIHE on the suitability of applicants for appointment to the office of Clerk and to other offices for which qualifications are prescribed under Section 41 (including the making of a selection of persons who may be treated as eligible for such appointments).

### **(b) Code on Recruitment and Selection**

Establishing a Code of Procedure for securing fair and equal considerations of applications to Councils and the NIHE by persons seeking to be employed by them as officers, and fair and equal treatment of persons who are so employed.

### **(c) Human Resource Planning**

Assessing the probable future requirements of Councils and the NIHE for the recruitment of officers and securing publicity for the opportunities that are available to persons who may seek employment as such officers.

### **(d) Promoting Co-operation**

Promoting co-operation between Councils, the NIHE, public bodies, government departments and educational institutions in matters connected with the recruitment, training and terms and conditions of employment of officers and promoting the temporary transfer of officers (with their consent) in pursuance of arrangements made between Councils or between Councils and any such bodies, departments or institutions.

### **(e) Training**

Promoting or assisting the development of, or providing, facilities for the training of officers. This function is carried out by the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) who the Commission work closely with.

### **(f) Employee Relations**

Promoting or assisting the establishment of, or establishing, procedures for the negotiation between Councils and the NIHE and officers of Councils or the NIHE, or associations representing either of them, of standard rates of remuneration, or other terms and conditions of employment, for officers of Councils and the NIHE and recommending the adoption by Councils and the NIHE of rates, terms and conditions so negotiated.

As a public authority the Commission is required under the Freedom of Information Act to adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme setting out the classes of information it holds, the manner in which it publishes/intends to publish the information and the charges it intends to make for the information.

The Commission is committed to the highest standards of accountability and openness and this Publication Scheme is prepared to enable the Commission to fulfil its obligations under the legislation and to better inform the public of its communication and information systems.

The information contained in the Scheme will be made available to individuals on request under the terms as detailed in the Scheme. An individual has the right to request information which is not normally published by the Commission and can do so via email: [info@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:info@lgsc.org.uk). Please note that there may be exemptions to disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act which may be applied.

Overall responsibility for this publication scheme rests with the Director of the Local Government Staff Commission.

## **2. NOTES ON USING THE SCHEME**

This publication scheme sets out the information that the Commission will publish, how and when it will do so, and whether or not this information will be available free of charge. The classes of information to be published are set out under clearly defined headings which reflect the structure and operation of the Commission. The classes of information will be reviewed annually and additions made in light of requests made by the public.

The classes of information will not generally include:

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar

Publication does not refer solely to printed material. Publication has been interpreted as broadly as possible to include electronic documents, information included on the website, minutes of meetings, reports and leaflets. It is intended, as far as possible, to make material available on the Commission's website ([www.lgsc.org.uk](http://www.lgsc.org.uk)) on an ongoing basis.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme

### 3. REQUESTING INFORMATION

Where information is available on the website, a hypertext link will provide directions to the correct page on the website. Where information is not available on the website it can be obtained by post. A request can be made to the Commission Offices for any Class of Information as detailed in “Class of Information” of this document. Applicants should provide as much detail as possible to identify the information sought. Requests should be addressed to:

The Director of the Local Government Staff Commission for NI  
217 Formation Works, Meadow  
22 East Bridge Street  
Belfast  
BT1 3NR

Tel: (028) 90313200  
Email: [info@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:info@lgsc.org.uk)

### 4. CHARGING AND COPYRIGHT ISSUES

The Commission has determined four categories for charging for information required under this Scheme as follows:

#### 1. Free of charge

This category includes general facts and information relating to the Commission as well as information published on the Commission’s website (for those without internet access, a single print-out of the specific website content can be requested). It also includes answering telephone queries and providing copies of free leaflets.

#### 2. Priced Publications

Where the information required is available in a priced publication details of the publication, its cost and where to obtain it will be supplied.

#### 3. Photocopying costs and postage (plus a small administrative charge)

This category covers information which has already been prepared which can easily be photocopied or where a computer printout can be provided.

Where information is free of charge to view at Commission offices but a standard photocopy or certified copy is requested a charge will be made. The charges are as follows:

Printing and Photocopying:

- A4: £0.15 per sheet (B&W) £0.25 per sheet (Colour)
- A3: £0.30 per sheet (B&W) £0.60 per sheet (Colour)
  
- Certified copy charges per A4 page                      £2.50 each
- Administrative/ information retrieval time              £12.50 per hour
- Postage and packing    at cost

A minimum charge of £5 will apply.

The Commission will advise the applicant of any such charges at the time of the request. The charges will be payable in advance.

#### **4. Professional charges for locating and preparing information as requested**

Where preparing or gathering the required material can only be done by specialists or other professionals at a charge to the Commission, a written estimate will be given of the cost of providing such information. The cost will have to be paid in advance. The Commission will then aim to provide the information within a target of 20 working days.

VAT is not payable on requests made under the Freedom of Information Act. The Commission has the discretion to waive any charges if appropriate.

Where a request for information is outside the scope of the Publication Scheme, and the request is refused, no charge will be made. There will be no charge to appeal against a refusal to supply requested information. Nor will there be a charge to appeal against any charges made for requested information.

The Commission owns the copyright to the information it produces.

If information is to be re-used or reproduced, commercially or otherwise, written approval must be obtained from the Director of the Local Government Staff Commission

#### **5. EXEMPT INFORMATION**

To protect confidential or other information, where its disclosure may prejudice the interests of others, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 sets out a series of exemptions.

The classes of information which the Commission has specified in this scheme as being classes of information which it publishes or intends to publish may in some cases contain material which we consider to contain exempt information, as defined in Part II of the Act. Accordingly, any such information is excluded from this publication scheme. Where this occurs the Commission will outline which information has been withheld and explain what exemption has been applied and why.

Examples of exempt information under Part II of the Act include:

- Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters.
- Investigations and proceedings conducted by the Commission and related authorities.
- Information likely to prejudice law enforcement.
- Court records including records of tribunals and inquiries.
- Information likely to endanger the health and safety of any individual.
- Personal data or information.
- Information provided in confidence to/by the Commission.

- Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained.
- Information relating to commercial interests and trade secrets.

Where the Commission invokes the exemption provisions to withhold information, an applicant may seek a review of the decision.

## **6. COMPLAINTS/ REVIEW PROCEDURE**

Any member of the public who is dissatisfied with the Commission's handling of a request for information is entitled to seek an internal review by emailing: [info@lgsc.org.uk](mailto:info@lgsc.org.uk).

If the applicant remains dissatisfied, he/she can seek an independent review from the Information Commissioner. Requests for a review by the Information Commissioner should be made in writing directly to: The Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF (Tel: 08456 306 060).

## **7. CLASSES OF INFORMATION**

In order to increase understanding of the work and organisation of the Commission, published information is classified under seven headings as detailed below:

### **7.1 WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO**

### **7.2 WHAT WE SPEND AND HOW WE SPEND IT**

### **7.3 WHAT OUR PRIORITIES ARE AND HOW ARE WE DOING**

### **7.4 HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS**

### **7.5 OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **7.6 LISTS AND REGISTERS**

### **7.7 THE SERVICES WE OFFER**





## 7.1 WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

This heading contains organisation information, structures, location and contacts for the Commission.

**Charges:** Information is provided free of charge, or at the rate shown in the Commission's Charging Structure (section 4).

<b>Class of Information</b>	<b>How to Access</b>
Functions of the Commission.	Provides details about functions of the Commission.  <a href="#">Functions - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Legislative Information.	Provides an explanation of the legislative basis of the activities of the Commission.  <a href="#">Organisation Profile - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Partnership Arrangements.	Details the organisations that the Commission works with in partnership.  <a href="#">Governance - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Information on the Commission Members.	Names of Commission members and their role outside the Commission.  <a href="#">Commission Members - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Location and Contact Details.	This provides the address and contact details of the Commission.  <a href="#">Contact - Local Government Staff Commission</a>

## 7.2 WHAT WE SPEND AND HOW WE SPEND IT

This heading contains financial information relating to the Commission.

**Charges:** Information is provided free of charge, or at the rate shown in the Commission's Charging Structure (section 4).

Class of Information	How To Access
Financial Statements and Budgets.	Provides financial information relating to income and expenditure. Letter from Local Government Auditor confirming satisfaction with Accounts. <a href="#">Accounts - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Capital Programme.	Information on capital expenditure such as spending reviews, financial audit reports and staff and board members' allowances and expenses. <a href="#">Accounts - Local Government Staff Commission</a>

### 7.3 WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES AND HOW ARE WE DOING

This heading details information on the Commission's strategies and plans, performance indicators, audit, inspections and reviews.

**Charges:** Information is provided free of charge, or at the rate shown in the Commission's Charging Structure (section 4).

<b>Class of Information</b>	<b>How to Access</b>
Current Annual Report.	The Annual Report includes the Annual Accounts and details progress against objectives and targets throughout the past year. <a href="#">Governance - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Current Business and Corporate Plans.	Business objectives and targets for the main services provided by the Commission. <a href="#">Strategic Plan - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report.	The report sets out the background of the Equality and Diversity Group, as well as their priorities as we continue to work with our stakeholders and seek to support and assist councils to ensure equality of opportunity and good relations as an employer, a service provider and a civic leader. <a href="#">Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Local Government Staff Commission News	A magazine providing information to councils in relation to areas of interest and the implementation of Commission initiatives. <a href="#">Ezine - Local Government Staff Commission</a>

## 7.4 HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS

This heading details the decision-making processes and records of decisions.

**Charges:** Information is provided free of charge, or at the rate shown in the Commission's Charging Structure (section 4).

<b>Class of Information</b>	<b>How to Access</b>
Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees.	<p>This Code has been drafted by a working group comprising officers from local government, the Department for Communities, the Local Government Staff Commission and the Trade Unions. It has been agreed by the Local Government Staff Commission and is promulgated under the authority of the Local Government Staff Commission under Section 40(4) (f) of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972.</p> <p>It is therefore issued by the Local Government Staff Commission as a statutory recommendation for adoption by all councils and the Staff Commission from 1st April 2021.</p> <p><a href="#">Organisation Profile - Local Government Staff Commission</a></p>
Code of Conduct for Commission Members.	<p>The Code of Conduct for Staff Commission Members 2020 details the standards expected from Commission members when carrying out their role as Commission members. The Commission's Management Statement should be read in conjunction with the Code of Conduct.</p> <p><a href="#">Commission Members - Local Government Staff Commission</a></p>
Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection.	<p>This Code sets out good practice in recruitment and selection. The Commission issues it as a statutory recommendation to the 11 councils/NIHE. All vacancies are publicly advertised and recruited in line with the procedures in this Code.</p> <p><a href="#">Organisation Profile - Local Government Staff Commission</a></p>
Equality Scheme.	<p>This document sets out the Commission's commitment to and proposals for fulfilling the statutory obligations to promote equality of opportunity and good relations in compliance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. It was approved by the Equality Commission</p>

	in April 2001. <a href="#"><u>Governance - Local Government Staff Commission</u></a>
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## 7.5 OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This heading details the current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities.

**Charges:** Information is provided free of charge, or at the rate shown in the Commission's Charging Structure (section 4).

<b>Class of Information</b>	<b>How to Access</b>
Customer Service.	Publication Scheme. <a href="#">Freedom of information statement - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Policies and Procedures for the conduct of business.	LGSC Standing Orders for conduct of meetings. Management Statement. <a href="#">The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland</a>
Policies and Procedures for the provision of services.	Equality Scheme. <a href="#">Governance - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Policies and procedures for the recruitment and employment of staff.	How the Commission recruits staff. <a href="#">Organisation Profile - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Records Management.	Publication Scheme. Retention and Disposal Schedule. <a href="#">The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland.</a>

## 7.6 LISTS AND REGISTERS

This details information relating to lists and registers held by the Commission.

**Charges:** Information is provided free of charge, or at the rate shown in the Commission's Charging Structure (section 4).

<b>Class of Information</b>	<b>How to Access</b>
Public Registers and registers held as public record.	The Commission does not hold this information.
Asset Register.	Details of the Commissions general assets. <a href="#">Annual Reports and Accounts - Local Government Staff Commission</a>
Register of Members and Officer's Interests.	Details the interests of members and officers and can be viewed by appointment at Commission offices.
Disclosure logs.	The Commission keeps copies of all requests made for information Register of Gifts and Hospitality provided to Members and Senior Officers.

## 7.7 THE SERVICES WE OFFER

This section details information relating to the services currently provided by the Commission.

**Charges:** Information is provided free of charge, or at the rate shown in the Commission's Charging Structure (section 4).

Class of Information	How To Access
Other relevant information pertaining to the Commission.	BOOST Mentoring Programme. Diversity Ambassador Programme. Guidance for Local Government Trans Equality. Local Government Chief Executive Appraisal Best Practice Guidelines. Managing Maternity Leave – Managers Guidance and Supporting your Maternity. Staywell Hub. <a href="#">The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland</a>





