



Mr. Pat Fannin,  
Committee of Public Accounts,

Sent by email only: [PAC@oireachtas.ie](mailto:PAC@oireachtas.ie)

29 October 2021

Your Reference: S0478 PAC33

Dear Mr. Fannin,

I refer to your letter of 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2021.

The Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC) is an independent statutory body, with a total staff complement of 135 approved posts, in addition to its 3 Commissioners. It was established under the Garda Síochána Act 2005 and set up in 2007.

GSOC's mission is to provide efficient, fair and independent oversight of policing in Ireland. Its primary responsibility is to deal with complaints made by members of the public concerning the conduct of members of the Garda Síochána. The current commissioners are Hugh Hume and Emily Logan who took up their roles earlier this year and the Chief Commissioner is the Honourable Ms. Justice Mary Ellen.

The Department works closely to support GSOC and following extensive engagement in 2018, significant additional resources were made available in Budget 2019 to GSOC to address its increasing workload. As a result 42 additional posts were sanctioned to support GSOC's work and I understand these additional staff were recruited 2019.

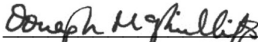
A budget of c. €11.3m was provided to GSOC in 2021. Approximately €8.4m of this relates to pay, while the balance, €2.9m, is for non-pay costs. It is worth noting that GSOC's budget increased by 18% in the period 2016 to 2021.

The chairperson of GSOC wrote to the Department in May this year in relation to additional funding requirements for 2021. The Department had a number of meetings with GSOC and discussed options for additional funding in 2021. In July, there was agreement that the Department would manage overall funding within the Vote so that GSOC could incur additional expenditure in the region of €300k in 2021. This additional funding would enable GSOC to address the immediate needs identified in their letter including a number of key investigations.

GSOC also made an additional funding request in respect of 2022 in the Estimates submission for the Justice Vote Group. This included a request for additional pay funding to cover a proposed increase in staff numbers to meet an increasing volume of complaint cases and the non-pay increases are in respect of additional ICT, legal and training costs. Overall GSOC has been allocated an additional €2.133m for 2022. This is approximately 19% on their 2021 allocation and is made up of €1.333m for Pay and €800k Non-pay.

Finally I have confirmed with GSOC that its accounts for year ended 2020 have now been audited and that the final accounts are with GSOC's Chairperson for signature prior to being sent back to the C&AG. These accounts will be submitted to the Oireachtas, once this process is completed.

Yours sincerely,

  
Oonagh McPhillips,  
Secretary General