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By email: [Redacted]

Our ref: FOI2021/19786
31 August 2021

Dear [Redacted]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Conflict of Interest Policy

Thank you for your request for information of 30 July 2021 about Defra's conflict of interest policy. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your information request and our response are set out below.

Please provide your conflicts of interest policy and guidance.

The information you have requested is being partially withheld under section 21 of the FOIA. Section 21 exempts information if this information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption and Defra is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information.

The information in scope of this request is contained in the Civil Service Code, the Civil Service Management Code (CSMC) and the Departmental conflict of interest policy which we attach at Annex C.

All civil servants are bound by the Civil Service Code, which includes the value of integrity: 'putting the obligations of public service above your own personal interests'. The Code is available online at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-code/the-civil-service-code>

The CSMC sets out regulations and instructions to departments and agencies regarding civil servants' terms and conditions of service. This includes guidance on how civil servants should handle conflicts of interest that might affect their work. It is for each department or agency to reflect these standards in their staff handbook. The CSMC is available online at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-servants-terms-and-conditions>

Information disclosed in response to this FOIA request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on GOV.UK, together with



any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

We attach Annex A, explaining the copyright that applies to the information being released to you, and Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]

Information Rights Team

InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs or logos) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

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Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party see the [Intellectual Property Office's website](#).

Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Andrew Mobsby, Head of Information Rights via email at InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our website.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure.

The ICO's offices are currently closed so please visit their website on how to contact them during this period, here:

<https://ico.org.uk>

Additionally if you wish to make a complaint to the ICO please use the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>