

DECEMBER 2021 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION RESPONSES

Year	Month	FOI Reference	Topic
2021	Dec	FOI/21/195	The Northern Ireland Protocol: section 75 screening and equality impact assessments
2021	Dec	FOI/21/201	Ministerial meetings with Loyalist groups
2021	Dec	FOI/21/207	Spending on Christmas parties and decorations
2021	Dec	FOI/21/208	Correspondence with Owen Patterson MP
2021	Dec	FOI/21/210	Departmental meetings on commissioning an official history of the Troubles
2021	Dec	FOI/21/211	Guidance on working remotely overseas
2021	Dec	FOI/21/212	COP26 accommodation costs
2021	Dec	FOI/21/213	Staff suggestions scheme
2021	Dec	FOI/21/214	Correspondence with Steve Brine MP
2021	Dec	FOI/21/216	Ministerial communications on the shooting of Paul Whitters
2021	Dec	FOI/21/217	Inventory management system
2021	Dec	FOI/21/219	Good Friday Agreement referendum: staffing resources
2021	Dec	FOI/21/220	Spending on home working equipment
2021	Dec	FOI/21/222	Transparency data: spending over £25,000 in September 2021
2021	Dec	FOI/21/227	Selling of departmental buildings and land
2021	Dec	FOI/21/228	Archival file request: PIRA terrorism in Great Britain
2021	Dec	FOI/21/233	Correspondence between the Northern Ireland Assembly and the World Economic Forum

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/195
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>In late 2019 the UK Government made a policy decision to sign up to the Withdrawal Agreement with the European Union, which included the Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland, and endorsed this agreement to Parliament.</i> <i>Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act. Your duties under the act require the conducting of screening exercises on new policies with effect in Northern Ireland to assess equality impacts on people in Section 75 categories and good relations between communities.</i> <i>Under this request I am requesting electronic copies of the following:</i> <i>1. A copy of the completed Section 75 screening form for the NI/IE Protocol</i> <i>2. A copy of the full Equality Impact Assessment, if one was completed.</i> <i>3. If (1) or (2) do not exist I wish to see the record(s) which document the justification behind doing so.</i>
Response	In answer to your questions: - I can confirm that: - A copy of the completed Section 75 screening forms for draft parts of the NI/IE Protocol has previously been published and is available here; and - Further information within the scope of your request is held by the Department, however it is being withheld from release by way of Section 22 (information intended for future publication) of the Freedom of Information Act. - We do not hold the information requested. - We do not hold the information requested. It is the Department's position that the information requested is exempt by way of Section 22 (information intended for future publication) of the Freedom of Information Act. When relying on this exemption public authorities are required to consider the public interest in the release of the information. I shall therefore set out here the factors considered by the Department in favour of releasing and withholding the requested information:

	<u>Factors in favour of release</u> • The Freedom of Information Act has an underlying element of openness and transparency. • A release of information would enable the public to engage with the internal workings of a public authority; Northern Ireland Office. <u>Factors in favour of withholding</u> • It is estimated that the information will be uploaded to our website shortly. • A release now, as part of this information request to a specific individual, would likely prejudice the value of this information to other researchers and/or interested parties. It is the Department's position, when the above public interest test arguments are considered, that it is not within the public interest to release this information at this time. The relevant information will be published on gov.uk. For further information on Section 22 (information intended for future publication) of the Freedom of Information Act please visit the independent regulators, the Information Commissioner's Office, website: https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1172/information-intended-for-future-publication-and-research-information-sections-22-and-22a-foi.pdf
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/198
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>I am writing to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act.</i> • <i>Does your department use CCTV cameras made by Hikvision, Dahua, Uniview or Kedacom? If yes please list which brands.</i> • <i>Are any of your CCTV cameras capable of facial recognition, temperature/thermal scanning, behaviour analysis, object detection or demographic detection (ie age, gender, clothing etc)? If yes please list which capabilities exist.</i>
Response	We are writing to advise you that we can neither confirm nor deny whether the requested information is held by the Northern Ireland Office. As has been the case under successive Administrations, it is not government policy to comment on the security arrangements of government buildings. Specific details regarding the make and model of security systems and their capabilities are withheld on national security grounds.

	The Northern Ireland Office therefore neither confirms nor denies whether it holds information falling within the scope of your request under section 24(2). Section 24 provides that the duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that, exemption from section 1(1)(a) is required for the purpose of safeguarding national security. Section 24 is a qualified exemption and we have considered the balance of public interest in neither confirming nor denying we hold this information against the public interest in us denying whether the information is held. The Northern Ireland Office recognises that there is a general public interest in openness in government. This helps to encourage greater public engagement with political life and facilitates the proper public scrutiny of our processes and procedures, which in turn helps reinforce high standards of performance and governance. I have weighed these interests against a very strong public interest in safeguarding national security, which could only be overridden in exceptional circumstances. Confirming or denying whether information is held would therefore prejudice national security. I have therefore determined that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in confirming or denying that information in relation to your request is held.
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/201
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>This is a request under FOI for all information held relating to two meetings between the NIO and;</i> <i>18th May - Let's Talk Loyalism</i> <i>18th June - Her Loyal Voice</i>
Response	I can confirm that information within scope of your original request is held by the Department. I would also like to clarify that the date of the meeting with Her Loyal Voice was 22 June 2021 and not 18 June 2021 as initially reported on our transparency data. After careful consideration, we have provided you with the attached information but please note that these items have been redacted in line with section 40 (2) (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. <u>Section 40 (personal data)</u> As can be seen, in order to facilitate this information release it has been necessary to redact individuals' personal data. It is the Department's position that this information is exempt by way of Section 40 (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act.

The redacted information consists of personal information – names and email addresses of Department staff and others. The Department, therefore, considers it exempt by way of Section 40(2) (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act.

The information is considered exempt by way of Section 40(2) (personal data) as these person(s) could not reasonably expect that their personal information would be disclosed therefore doing so would breach current data protection legislation.

For further information on Section 40 (personal data) exemption under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act please visit the independent regulators, the Information Commissioners Office, website: [Section 40 Guidance Notes](#)

Section 36 (effective conduct of public affairs)

We have not provided you with copies of some other documents held by the Department as exemptions apply under section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act (prejudice to the conduct of public affairs):

It is the Department's position that the information for these elements of your request is exempt by way of Section 36 (effective conduct of public affairs) of the Freedom of Information Act. When relying on this exemption public authorities are required to consider the public interest in the release of the information. I shall therefore set out here the factors considered by the Department in favour of releasing and withholding the requested information:

Factors in favour of release

- The Freedom of Information Act has an underlying element of openness and transparency.
- The release of this information would engage with the public in the workings and considerations undertaken by the Department.
- There has been recent media, political and public interest in UKG engagement with community representatives on a range of issues, in particular the NI Protocol. This is a live topic of concern and it is accepted that there is a general interest in knowing what the content of these discussions might have been.

Factors in favour of withholding

- Department officials must be able to provide relevant advice in a protected space (without fear of future disclosure).
- Without this protected space Department officials would likely feel constrained in their ability to advise freely, frankly and fully when providing such advice. This, therefore, would likely to lead to less informative and candid advice being supplied.
- Officials and community representatives must be able to exchange their views on topical issues without fear of such views being disclosed. If such views were to be disclosed, there would be an impact on the frankness or candour with which persons are able to provide their views in the future. This would adversely affect the ability of Ministers and officials to

engage with organisations on matters which affect their communities, in order to develop Government policy in these areas.

It is the Department's position, when the above public interest arguments are considered, that it is not within the public interest to release this information as it would likely prejudice the Department's effective conduct of public affairs.

I would like to take this opportunity to confirm that the Department is relying on the second limb of the Section 36 exemption; would be likely to. Additionally, for clarity, the Department is also relying upon the following specific sub-sections:

36(2)(b)(i) the free and frank provision of advice

36(2)(b)(ii) the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation

36(2)(c) would otherwise prejudice, or would be likely otherwise to prejudice, the effective conduct of public affairs.

For further information on Section 36 (effective conduct of public affairs) exemption under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act please visit the independent regulators, the Information Commissioner's Office, website; [Section 36 Guidance Notes](#).

Finally, please note that the fully withheld information listed above also contains personal data and thus the exemption at section 40 (2)(personal data) also applies to this information.

Applied redactions & information being released

Alongside the documents which are exempt in their entirety, a small amount of information is also considered exempt by way of section 36 (effective conduct of public affairs) in the information being released to you. Please note only information redacted by way of section 36 (effective conduct of public affairs) has been individually identified as such within the released material; any other redaction should be considered as apply by way of section 40 (personal data).

Further information

While we have withheld some information under section 36 we are happy to provide you with the following, additional information regarding the meetings, that falls outside of our duties under the Act. The meeting with Let's Talk Loyalism, a newly established advocacy group, was primarily to explore the origins of the group, the reaction to its formation within the PUL community and beyond, and to hear about the group's plans for the future.

	The meeting was also an opportunity to listen to concerns and views of loyalist communities on a range of policy issues - in particular about the impact of the Ireland/NI Protocol. Similarly, the meeting with Her Loyal Voice was an opportunity to hear about the aims and objectives of that platform, and to explore issues raised by loyalist women through an engagement survey carried out by the platform. The report of the survey is available at the following link: https://herloyalvoice.com/opinion/loyalist-womens-engagement-survey/
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/207
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information:</i> <i>The total budget for Christmas parties or celebrations in your department, of any size. Please could you include budgets for every year since 2015?</i> <i>The total spending on other Christmas (or festive) spending in your department, including decorations, cards and the cost of a Christmas tree. If possible, please can this spending be itemised and provided for every year since 2015.</i> <i>If applicable, please can you provide details about your department's Christmas tree, including price, height and whether it is real or synthetic?</i>
Response	I can confirm that following a review of our records, the Northern Ireland Office spent the following amount on Christmas cards. £0 in 15/16 £0 in 16/17 £0 in 17/18 £270.00 in 18/19 £185.00 in 19/20 £260.00 in 20/21 Within the timeframe requested the Department has had no budget for parties, celebrations, decorations, or trees.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/208
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>I am writing to you with a request under the Freedom of Information act.</i>

	<i>My request relates to Mr Owen Paterson, the Member of Parliament (MP) for North Shropshire until he resigned on November 5 2021. Under the act, I would like to ask :</i> <i>1. The number of times your department's ministers or special advisors have corresponded with Mr Paterson, or vice versa;</i> <i>2. The dates of each piece of correspondence relevant to point 1) above, and;</i> <i>3. Complete copies of any correspondence relevant to point 1) above.</i> <i>Please limit your search for relevant material to the period between 1 April 2019 and November 5 2021.</i> <i>I would like to make it clear that I am not requesting any correspondence which was genuinely related to Mr Paterson's constituents in North Shropshire.</i>
Response	I can confirm that the Department holds information relevant to your request. Please find attached the information being released to you. As you can see in order to facilitate this information release a small amount of personal data has been redacted by way of section 40 (2) (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act. It is the Department's position that a release of this information would breach current data protection legislation and is therefore exempt by way of section 40 (2). For further information regarding the exemption as section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act please visit the independent regulator, the Information Commissioners, website: Section 40 guidance notes

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/210
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>Under FOI legislation please provide me with minutes of all NIO meetings, which occurred in the last 12 months, which related to plans for the Northern Ireland Office to commission an official history of the Troubles.</i>
Response	I can confirm that information within the scope of your request is held by the Department, however it is being withheld from release at this by way of Section 35 (formulation of government policy) of the Freedom of Information Act. <u><i>Section 35 (formulation of government policy)</i></u> It is the Department's position that the information requested is exempt by way of Section 35 (formulation of government policy) of the Freedom of Information Act.

	When relying on this exemption public authorities are required to consider the public interest in the release of the information. I shall therefore set out here the factors considered by the Department in favour of releasing and withholding the requested information: <u>Factors in favour of release</u> • The Freedom of Information Act has an underlying element of openness and transparency. • A release of information would enable the public to engage with the internal workings of a public authority; Northern Ireland Office. <u>Factors in favour of withholding</u> • Ministers and other departmental officials engaged in sensitive policy discussions require a safe space in which they can debate freely and frankly. • Ministers and other departmental officials must be able to provide relevant advice in a protected space (without fear of future disclosure). • Without this protected space and other departmental officials would likely feel constrained in their ability to advise freely, frankly and fully when providing such advice. This, therefore, would likely lead to less informative and candid advice, opinions and decision making. It is the Department's position, when the above public interest arguments are considered, that it is not within the public interest to release this information as it relates to the formulation of government policy. For clarity, the Department is also relying upon the following specific sub-sections: 35(1)(a) the formulation or development of government policy 35(1)(d) the operation of any Ministerial private office For further information on Section 35 (formulation of government policy) of the Freedom of Information Act please visit the independent regulators, the Information Commissioners Office, website: Section 35 https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/2260003/section-35-government-policy.pdf
FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/211
Month Issued	December 2021

Request	<i>In relation to the Cabinet Office Civil Service HR guidance (Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Working Remotely Overseas HR guidance – Version 3), please can you advise the following:</i> <i>1. Within your department, are you still allowing staff to work remotely overseas due to exceptional circumstances, if not, when did this advice change?</i> <i>2. Are you allowing the following “The department will consider, on a case by case basis, requests by employees to accompany a Civil Service partner who has been posted abroad” within your department?</i> <i>3. Can you advise how you define the term “Civil Service partner”? (ie: the definition and what ‘tests’ need to be met to be classed as a partner).</i>
Response	We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I can confirm that some of the requested information is held by the Department. <i>1. Within your department, are you still allowing staff to work remotely overseas due to exceptional circumstances, if not, when did this advice change?</i> In response to question 1, any staff who are currently working overseas, can continue to do so as any staff working remotely overseas would have been assessed and agreed for a specified amount of time; therefore an end for their return would have been put in place. If any unforeseen exceptional circumstances arise in either the overseas location or the UK which prevented a return on the agreed date, the Department would assess each situation on a case by case basis to ensure the safety of all. <i>2. Are you allowing the following, “The department will consider, on a case by case basis, requests by employees to accompany a Civil Service partner who has been posted abroad”, within your department.</i> In response to question 2 and in line with policy and if a request was received, the department would consider, on a case by case basis, requests by employees to accompany a Civil Service partner who has been posted abroad. Also in line with policy, the employee and their manager should speak to the departmental HR Business Partner in this case. <i>3. Can you advise how you define the term “Civil Service partner”? (i.e.: the definition and what ‘tests’ need to be met to be classed as partner)</i>

	In response to question 3, the department would be guided in defining a 'partner' as set out in the Special Leave policy guidance as: "someone whom you have a close and stable (i.e., long-term) relationship with. This includes married couples, civil partners, individuals who are living together though they are not related by blood or marriage, including those in same sex relationships". There are no specific tests set out that need to be met, to be classed as 'partner', beyond the guidance stated above.
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/212
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>Using the Freedom of Information Act, can I find out how much money you spent on accommodation costs (hotels / B&Bs and air B&Bs) for staff (in house or outsourced) for the Cop26 summit please?</i> <i>If possible and within the cost limit, can you also detail how many staff you put up in accommodation for Cop26? If this busts the cost limit, then just answer the above question please.</i>
Response	Your request has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (2000). I can confirm that the Department holds information relevant to your request. Please find below the information being released to you. <u>Information released from the Northern Ireland Office</u> The Northern Ireland Office did not incur any costs for accommodation for staff in relation to the CoP 26 summit, as it was not required.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/213
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>I write to ask the following questions under the Freedom of Information Act:</i> <i>Does your organisation run a Staff Suggestion Scheme under which staff can make suggestions to improve effectiveness and/or efficiency, then If YES, I write to ask the following questions:</i> <i>1. Could you please provide a copy of your staff suggestion schemes latest instructions/guidance and/or internal publicity as issued to staff.</i> <i>2. Also could you please provide the latest report of achievements of the scheme for the latest available year?</i> <i>3. And finally could you please provide the numbers of staff (and grades/responsibility level) responsible for the running of your organisations Staff Suggestions Scheme.</i>

Response	I can confirm that information within scope of your original request is held by the Department. Please find attached information which is being released to you. In response to question 1, please see attachment 1 that displays the instructions/guidance and/or internal publicity as issued to staff. In response to question 2, please see attachment 2 that displays a list of the scheme's achievements over the last year. In response to question 3, the scheme is managed by fewer than five members of staff at Band B level. The actual figure is being withheld by way of Section 40(2) (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act and is being presented in this format - <i>fewer than five</i> - so as to protect individual(s) personal data and not breach current data protection legislation. Suggestions can be brought to a group of staff across various grades to discuss how they can be best taken forward. These staff members take this responsibility on a voluntary basis in addition to their roles. For further information on Section 40 (personal data) exemption under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act please visit the independent regulators, the Information Commissioner's Office, website: Section 21 guidance notes
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/214
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>I am writing to you with a request under the Freedom of Information act.</i> <i>My request relates to Mr Steve Brine, the Member of Parliament (MP) for Winchester and Chandler's Ford.</i> <i>Under the act, I would like to ask :</i> <i>1) The number of times your department's ministers or special advisors have corresponded with Mr Brine, or vice versa;</i> <i>2) The dates of each piece of correspondence relevant to point 1) above, and;</i> <i>3) Complete copies of any correspondence relevant to point 1) above.</i> <i>Please limit your search for relevant material to the period between 1 April 2019 and November 24 2021.</i>

	<i>I would like to make it clear that I am not requesting any correspondence which was genuinely related to Mr Brine's constituents in Winchester and Chandler's Ford.</i>
Response	It has been estimated by the Department that to fully satisfy this information request would exceed the appropriate limit as set out at section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act. Your request, therefore, is being refused at this time by way of section 12 (appropriate limit) of the Freedom of Information Act by the Northern Ireland Office. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act, public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would likely exceed the "appropriate limit". The "appropriate limit" for the purposes of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act has been set at £600 for central government departments. To fully satisfy elements of your request would require a manual review of all paper and all electronically held information (staff and shared email inboxes, drives and servers). It is this lengthy review, in both terms of historical date range and volume of information, which has been estimated by the Department, would likely exceed the above-mentioned appropriate limit. It may be that we can provide you with some information within this appropriate limit, if you are able to narrow the scope of your request. The following may help in your decisions as to the nature of any reframed information request you may wish to re-submit: • Narrow your definition of 'correspondence' to letters only. • Specify a single address, physical or electronic from which these letters might have been received or sent to. • Explicitly exclude policy officials and private office staff. Owing to the general of a department and the operation of a Minister's private office, correspondence is often sent on a Minister's behalf. It should be noted that if you did re-submit a reframed question there is still the possibility that this refined request could also be subject to the application of the section 12 provisions (or in-deed any of the other in-build Freedom of Information Act exemptions). If this is the case then of course we will endeavour to continue to assist you as much as possible in order to bring your request under the appropriate limit. If you do re-submit a request it will be handled as a new request under the appropriate legislation.

	For further information on Section 12 (appropriate limit) of the Freedom of Information Act please visit the independent regulators, the Information Commissioners Office, website: Section 12
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/216
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<u>Original Request [FOI/21/186]</u> <i>This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. I would like to request the following information:</i> <i>From 8th January 2018 to 13 February 2020, please provide all correspondence and communications that refers to, [or relates] to [Paul] Whitters, a 15-year-old boy who was shot in the head with a plastic bullet fired by a member of the RUC in Derry, in 1981.</i> <i>I ask that you focus your search on correspondence and communications only sent and received by the following individuals:</i> • Karen Bradley, former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland • Julian Smith, former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland <u>Re-framing supplied by the applicant</u> <i>I would like to narrow the request to searching using the keyword 'Whitters' - I'm happy to remove 'or relates to'.</i>
Response	It has been estimated, even with the narrowing already undertaken, by the Department that to fully satisfy this information request would exceed the appropriate limit as set out at section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act. Your request, therefore, is being refused at this time by way of section 12 (appropriate limit) of the Freedom of Information Act by the Northern Ireland Office. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act, public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would likely exceed the “appropriate limit”. The “appropriate limit” for the purposes of section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act has been set at £600 for central government departments. The Department had originally envisioned that a review of the former Secretaries of State, Karen Bradley and Julian Smith’s archived email accounts, would satisfy this enquiry. However we did not initially take into account emails that might have

	been sent by the former Secretaries of State but then deleted from their inbox in-line with normal retention procedures. These would then not be recoverable by a simple search of their archived inboxes. To fully satisfy your request would, it has been estimated, require a much broader review of all paper and all electronically held information (staff and shared email inboxes, drives and servers) than previously anticipated. It is this lengthy review, in both terms of historical date range and volume of information, which the Department believes would likely exceed the above-mentioned appropriate limit. Despite this being a hypothetical scenario, the Department is bound by the terms of the Freedom of Information Act to set this out to you before beginning your search. The Department recommends you refine your search once more in line with the following suggestion: <i>Limit the request to only that information which is still solely maintained within the -archived in-boxes of former Secretaries of State Karen Bradley and Julian Smith archived email accounts.</i> It should be noted that if you did re-submit a reframed question there is still the possibility that this refined request could also be subject to the application of the section 12 provisions (or in-deed any of the other in-built Freedom of Information Act exemptions). If this is the case then of course we will endeavour to continue to assist you as much as possible in order to bring your request under the appropriate limit. If you do re-submit a request it will be handled as a new request under the appropriate legislation. For further information on Section 12 (appropriate limit) of the Freedom of Information Act please visit the independent regulators, the Information Commissioners Office, website: Section 12
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FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/217
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>Please can you advise on the following:</i> <i>1. What Inventory Management System you use?</i> <i>2. How long roughly have you had this?</i> <i>3. Does your system serve a single site location or multi-site?</i> <i>4. If multi-site - how many sites?</i>

	5. <i>Do you have any plans to change your system?</i>
Response	We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I can confirm that following a review of all electronic and paper based records it has been responsibly determined that the Northern Ireland Office uses no inventory management systems.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/218
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>Please could I make a freedom of information request as to how much the 1998 Northern Irish good Friday agreement cost to run. And if all the funding was provided by the UK government?</i>
Response	Your request could be interpreted in a number of different ways, such as: • The cumulative cost to the UK Government since 1998 of the institutions established by the Agreement, including the Northern Ireland Executive and the block grant provided to it; or • The cost to the UK Government of the institutions established by the Agreement in the latest fiscal year, including the Northern Ireland Executive and the block grant provided to it; or • The cost to the UK Government of the Agreement through giving consideration to it in policymaking. If the meaning of your question relates to the cost of the UK Government funding the devolved institutions in Northern Ireland, which were established by the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, it may interest you to learn that HM Treasury publishes information on the UK Government's approach to this regularly through its Statement of Funding Policy. The latest release, dated October 2021, is available here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1030043/Statement_of_Funding_Policy_2021 - FINAL.pdf The latest budget, in which the Northern Ireland Executive received a record funding settlement of £15bn, is published by HM Treasury here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/budget-2021-documents/budget-2021-html You may wish to consider whether your request is better addressed to HM Treasury, which is the UK Government department responsible for maintaining control over public spending and setting the direction of the UK's economic policy.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/219
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>Please could I make a Freedom of information request for the numbers of volunteers as well as paid staff used to provide the 1998 good Friday agreement referendum?</i>
Response	We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I can confirm that following a review of all electronic and paper based records it has been responsibly determined that the Northern Ireland Office does not hold information that you have asked for. It is not in the remit of the NIO to hold such information; however may I suggest, if you have not already done so, that you contact the Electoral Office Northern Ireland on the following as their records may better suit you area of interest: https://www.eoni.org.uk/Utility/About-EONI/Freedom-of-information Please note as the Electoral Office Northern Ireland is an independent public authority under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act I am unsure how much, if at all, they will be able to assist.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/220
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>Please could you supply me with the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:</i> <i>1. How much has been spent by your department reimbursing claims for home working equipment since July 19 2021 to the present date?</i>
Response	We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I can confirm that the Northern Ireland Office has reimbursed, since 19 July 2021 to the present date (the 01 December 2021; the date this information request was received), no claims for home working equipment. Therefore the total spend by the Department is zero. It should be noted that home working equipment is provided by the Department to staff to fulfil their roles.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/222
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>I am looking for some assistance with your organisation's Spend/Transparency data, available on the following weblink:</i> https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nio-transparency-data-on-gpc-and-spending-over-25000--2

	<i>There appears to be no file available for the month of September 2021. Could you advise when the file will be made available to view online? Would it be possible for you to email me a copy of the September 2021 file</i>
Response	I can confirm that the Department holds information relevant to your request. Please see below the web links for the information which you have requested; • https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1040675/GPC_returns_Sept_Sept.csv/preview • https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1040163/Sept_invoices_transparency_5_1_Sheet1.csv/preview

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/227
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>This is a request for information about the number of buildings and plots of land sold by the department since January 2010.</i> <i>Could you please provide a list of land and buildings that have been sold since January 1, 2010, up to the present day?</i> <i>The data should include the address of the asset, the sale price, the date it was sold, the name of the buyer, the date it was originally acquired and how much was originally paid for it.</i>
Response	We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I can confirm that following a review of all electronic and paper based records it has been responsibly determined that the Northern Ireland Office does not hold information that you have asked for. That is to say for the period January 2010 to 13 December 2021 (the date the Department received your request) no buildings or plots of land were sold by the Department.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/228
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>I have been doing some historical research at The National Archives in Kew, more specifically looking at some of the files relating to the activities of the Irish Republican Army in Britain in the 1970s and the government's attempts to deal with the threat. Two currently closed files are of interest; they are described by TNA's catalogue 'Discovery' in the following way:</i> • <i>CJ 4/2820 [original departmental reference: 2560/1975-1]: IRA terrorism in Great Britain: anti-IRA measures 1 January 1975 - 31 December 1979</i>

	<i>CJ 4/6052 [original departmental reference: 2561/1975-1]: Provisional IRA intentions and activities in Great Britain 1 January 1975 - 31 December 1975</i> <i>The subject matter is self-evidently sensitive, but would it be possible to request more information about when these particular files might be considered for review.</i>
Response	I can confirm that the Department holds information relevant to your request. Files CJ 4/2820 and CJ 4/6052 are closed under section 3.4 of the Public Records Act. Records closed under 3.4 should be re-reviewed on a rolling 10 year basis, in line with the requirements set out in the Lord Chancellor's Security and Intelligence Instrument. These files were first reviewed for transfer to The National Archives (TNA) in 2006, and are therefore next due for re-review in 2026. During the information gathering process for this Freedom of Information request, the opportunity was taken to undertake a preliminary examination of the information within the two files. It was noted during these cursory reviews that if the information within the retained closed files was requested under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act it would most likely be exempt from release. As these studies were only preliminary and not, at this time, within the scope of this particular request detailed investigations (or indeed any public interest tests) as to the relevant Freedom of Information mechanisms were not fully considered. May I suggest, if you have not already done so, that you contact the Home Office as they have responsibility for terrorism in Great Britain. Their records may, therefore, better suit your area of study; foirequests@homeoffice.gov.uk.

FOI Request Reference	FOI/21/233
Month Issued	December 2021
Request	<i>This Freedom of Information request is made under the Freedom of Information Act.</i> <i>It is a request for disclosure of all communications between the Leader of the Northern Ireland Assembly Ms Arlene Foster and Ms Michelle O'Neill and The World Economic Forum, between 21 December 2019 and 21 December 2021.</i>
Response	We think your request is best directed to the Northern Ireland Assembly: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/about-the-assembly/contacts/