

2021 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ATTACHMENTS

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FW: Meeting with NIO

21 January 2021 at 12:29

To: Madeleine Alessandri <madeleine.alessandri@nio.gov.uk>

Madeleine/all

Please see below email, which I received earlier from [REDACTED] Chairman of the LCC. As you will see it is a copy of the statement which the LCC is proposing to issue following our meeting on Tuesday.

It is positive that [REDACTED] has shared with us as promised and I think it accurately reflects their position as outlined on Tuesday.

I do note however that they do appear to be seeking an explanation as to why they were 'excluded' from the Centenary Community Forum. [REDACTED] and her team may have a view on how this wish to handle this.

I have indicated to [REDACTED] that we are very grateful to him for sharing.

Regards

[Quoted text hidden]

Policy Advisor
Political Affairs Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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UK/EU Trade Deal and Future Relationships Bill

4 January 2021 at 15:44

Reply-to: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED]
Happy new year to you and hope you keep well
The three groups making up the LCC are reporting a lot of concern and uncertainty about the Brexit arrangements for Northern Ireland, now that the break has finally occurred.
Would it be possible to arrange a briefing for a small delegation ?
This might help to disseminate actual information, and prevent trouble building up
Grateful if you could facilitate
Regards
[REDACTED]



FW: Meeting with NIO

21 January 2021 at 11:42

I attach a draft press release the LCC is proposing to issue
We undertook to share it with you before release
Regards

Sent from my Galaxy

A delegation from the Loyalist Communities Council has met with the Permanent Secretary of the Northern Ireland Office, Madeleine Alessandri, to be briefed on the implementation of the Northern Ireland protocol following the UKs' withdrawal from the European Union. The delegation comprising David Campbell (Chairman), Winston Irvine, Jimmy Birch, and Robert Williamson relayed concerns from loyalist/unionist areas that Northern Ireland would be treated separately from Great Britain and asked the NIO to ensure that HMG acted quickly to minimise disruption and to ensure that there would be no actual or perceived diminution in Northern Ireland's constitutional position.

The delegation strongly criticised the Irish government and nationalist representatives for only representing a nationalist perspective of the Belfast Agreement during the negotiations with the EU and asked the NIO to ensure that the new US President and Administration was briefed on the need for impartiality and respect for the majority position in Northern Ireland when it comes to dealing with NI/US issues. The LCC has repeated its appeal to loyalists to remain calm during this transition phase but also warned the NIO that it would be monitoring how Northern Ireland citizens would be treated under the new dispensation and would consider sponsoring legal action to protect the position of unionists if that became necessary.

The LCC delegation also emphasised the importance of appropriate events to mark the first centenary of Northern Ireland and has asked the NIO for an explanation as to why the loyalist community has been excluded from the Centenary Forum established by the Secretary of State.

END

For comment contact Robert Williamson



FW: Meeting with NIO

21 January 2021 at 12:51

To: 

Good afternoon 

Thanks for sharing, very much appreciated. And thanks again for the meeting on Tuesday, we found it very useful and hope that you did likewise.

Chat soon

Regards





UK/EU Trade Deal and Future Relationships Bill



4 January 2021 at 17:16

To: [Redacted]

Hello [Redacted] and a very Happy New Year to you too. As you'll have noticed I'm on leave but wanted to let you know that I did pick up your email and have fed it into the office. Should be able to get something set up no problem. Leave it with me and I'll get back to you later in week.

Cheers





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Stormont House
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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

14 March 2020

I am delighted that InfraStrata PLC are taking steps to re-establish Harland & Wolff's presence in the global cruise ship engineering sector. I know that this has been a key element of InfraStrata's strategy to focus on the cruise industry and returning this iconic yard back to the days when it was a market leader in this sector - building on the engineering expertise that the shipyard and its workforce have to offer.

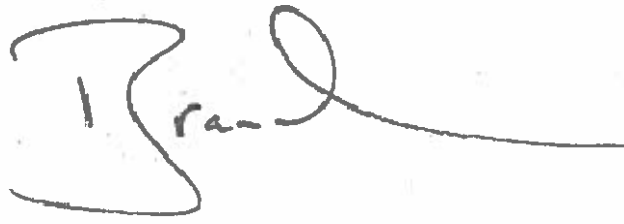
I understand that potential contracts are being negotiated to secure business for the shipyard in this sector, and that there have been some concerns regarding the dry-docking of cruise ships at UK ports, due to measures being undertaken to mitigate the spread of Covid-19.

The United Kingdom has been taking a sensible and proportionate approach to responding to Covid-19. I would like to reassure you that, to the extent possible, the UK Government will do everything we can to avoid any unnecessary interruption to commercial activities.

In this case, the relevant authorities are devolved to the NI Executive and I attach a letter from the Minister for the Economy, Diane Dodds MLA, who has written to me supporting the planned refurbishment work and providing reassurance that she does not envisage Covid-19 being a hindrance to this work.

Belfast Port has updated its guidance for all ships entering Belfast. The guidance signposts the steps and documents required to be submitted by Masters of all vessels arriving into the Port at least 24 hours prior to arrival. This guidance is available at: <https://www.belfast-harbour.co.uk/port/covid-1>.

I have no doubt that this will be a significant boost for NI, both in terms of the jobs that this contract will create but also more widely by putting Belfast on the map again for its engineering expertise. I wish you and the company the very best in this endeavour.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandon', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

RT HON BRANDON LEWIS CBE MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

23rd March 2020

RT Hon Brandon Lewis CBE
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1 2HQ

Dear Minister Lewis

Re: - Harland & Wolff & Islandmagee Energy

Thank you for your recent letter in support of bringing a Royal Caribbean Cruises limited (RCCL) cruise vessel into Harland and Wolff (Belfast) Limited. By way of an update, we, in fact, secured two vessels from RCCL for a short period of time. At this point in time, one vessel refit has been put on hold and the other has been cancelled until RCCL can bring specialist equipment manufacturers to the shipyard, who are currently unable to undertake international travel. Unfortunately, this is a recurring theme. Despite our best efforts and having the yard full though to July till just a few weeks ago, we now find ourselves with an empty yard - P&O, Stena, Irish Ferries, Sea Trucks and Pullman Tours all cancelling or postponing projects. The majority of ferries are cancelling repair works in order to keep vessels in service for the transportation of essential supplies. As I write to you, a few new enquiries are being received. However, our fixed overhead commitments continue to be payable.

Having rescued the yard on 05 December 2019 we were content with our progress having docked numerous ships. An initial set of five vessels within the first forty-five days (with the Christmas break in between) was a great start. With the traction gained in the market prior to COVID -19, we have demonstrated a viable business across all six of our core sectors; Cruise & Ferry, Defence, Commercial Shipping, Oil & Gas and Renewables. Our business plan demonstrates a projected turnover in excess of £400m by 2025 employing 1400 direct and indirect employees with some 932 new full-time positions and 91 trade apprentices. We have backed up our growth plans by having already increased the workforce by 20% since the acquisition.

If we were to invest £140m to increase the depth of the building dock in order to be capable of taking in the latest generation of cruise vessels, the yard would transform itself into a centre of excellence for cruise vessel upgrade projects. These projects can generate up to £120m (+/- 20%) each over a three-week period whilst the vessel is in the dry dock. Whilst we are already a recognised strategic asset given the length and breadth of the dock, we need the **added depth** in order to accommodate and welcome the next generation of cruise vessels. Early indications from several operators are that they would commit to a minimum spend in the yard should we make the upgrades on increasing the depth of the dry dock. The dry docks are owned by the Belfast Harbour Commissioners and Harland & Wolff holds a 90 year+ lease. Discussions have commenced with the Belfast Harbour Commissioner to enter into a new lease arrangement with them for a 100-year lease period. An upgrade of this strategic nature would be a game changing boost to the Northern Irish economy facilitating shipbuilding, major conversion and export. In our view, this will be the key to finally getting Harland & Wolff back on a solid footing by spreading the business over several key sectors. Apart from the

standard cruise vessels that will inevitably come into the yard once the COVID-19 crisis has abated, the immediate key pursuits are the Fleet Solid Support vessel (FSS) for the Royal Navy and the MV Patricia replacement for Trinity House.

We now find ourselves in a position wherein the capital markets are effectively closed till the City of London and financial institutions come back to their offices and start transacting on new business. There have been a lot of promises been made in relation to £5m funding packages. However, the detail that is coming through from our bankers Barclays is very worrying indeed (for example, stating that such funding will be based on 2019 turnover, double the 2019 annual wage bill or client certified requirements etc. Which being a Newco at H&W we do not qualify for). Further, InvestNI employment and training grants and working capital loans in relation to the acquisition are not progressing at pace. Whilst the recent announcement in relation 80% of wages being paid is welcome, time is of the essence and few details exist.

Our Islandmagee Gas Storage Project in County Antrim, that will create security of energy supply for Northern Ireland, is currently completing its public consultation in relation to the Marine License. By way of background, planning for the project was granted back in 2010. The rest of our European neighbours maintain around 25% of annual gas demand in storage whilst the UK now has less than 2% with the closure of the Rough Gas Storage Facility. Clearly this is a proposed development that is of the upmost strategic importance especially given the likely restrictions on gas supply between the EU and the UK with Brexit on the horizon.

We have worked with the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) for eighteen months to ensure our proposal is acceptable to them and that it complies with or exceeds all current environmental regulations. This is a construction ready project that will create circa 400 direct and 1600 indirect jobs during the construction period lasting four years and 60 direct and 180 indirect jobs during the operational phase, such operational phase being in excess of forty years. This project is not only of strategic benefit to Northern Ireland but will also create a huge economic and labour boost on the back of the COVID-19 crisis. In addition, it will also provide circa £45-50m of fabrication work directly into Harland & Wolff over a two-year period.

In summary we seek your assistance on the following points: -

1. Fast tracking of the employment grants and loans from Invest NI in relation to the acquisition. To date we have received no government financial support.
2. Full support to obtain the maximum £5m (preferably £10m given the speed capital markets will recover after COVID 19) working capital loan for Harland & Wolff quickly. We are effectively a new but highly strategic business with an aggressive growth plan, therefore, the parameters for receiving any such loans based on 2019 metrics as set out will not be possible.
3. Clarity and quick accessibility to the 80% grant to cover wages in order to get complete certainty to avoid tough decisions being made in relation to numbers of employees.
4. Discussions around government grants, loans and guarantees or a combination of all to fund the capital expenditure for increasing the depth of the building dock.
5. Support in relation to the fast tracking of the Islandmagee Gas Storage Project.
6. Discussion around government loans and/or guarantees in relation to the £300m gas storage project given that the capital markets lack liquidity at this point in time.

7. Support in relation to securing defence works and for the replacement vessel for Trinity House into the shipyard.

We have invested substantial time and effort on our businesses in Northern Ireland and truly believe we will get through this current unprecedented event, come out stronger and be a key player in providing strong growth opportunities in the near term for the Northern Ireland economy.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch to discuss the above in further detail.

With best wishes,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

16 July 2020

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 18 June to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland regarding supporting InfraStrata Plc in their pursuit of a Marine Licence for their Gas Storage project at Islandmagee. He has asked us to respond on his behalf.

Planning is a devolved matter in Northern Ireland and the Secretary of State has no power to intervene. We would suggest engaging with both the Northern Ireland Department for the Economy and Department for Infrastructure to discuss progress in advancing such projects.

The Secretary of State wishes InfraStrata well in progressing their Gas Storage project and supporting job growth in Northern Ireland. He continues to work closely with the Northern Ireland Executive to support economic recovery in Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely,

**ECONOMY GROUP
NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE**



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Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

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Department for Business,
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1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

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E enquiries@beis.gov.uk
W www.gov.uk

Our ref: MCB2020/37085

30 November 2020

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
InfraStrata
8th Floor Northern & Shell Building
10 Lower Thames Street
London
EC3R 6AF

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter dated 11 November 2020. I am grateful to you for making me aware of the report produced by Oxford Analytica, outlining details of your Islandmagee gas storage project in Northern Ireland, and for keeping me and my officials informed. I welcome the progress that you are making with the project, which is clearly of interest to not only Northern Ireland, but to the whole of the UK, given the economic and security of supply benefits that it could bring. It is encouraging to hear this positive news as we continue our green recovery.

Please do continue to keep my officials informed of developments, although as you are aware, the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland retain responsibility for energy. As with previous correspondence, I am copying this to the Rt Hon Brandon Lewis CBE MP, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Yours ever,

RT HON KWASI KWARTENG MP
Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth

Cc Rt Hon Brandon Lewis CBE MP



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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
18 King William Street
London, EC4N 7BP
[REDACTED]

22 July 2020

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter of 23 March and for taking the time to meet with me on 8 July to discuss your ongoing efforts to secure the future of the Harland & Wolff shipyard. I was pleased to speak with you and hear about current developments at both InfraStrata and Harland & Wolff.

As discussed at the meeting, I will continue to engage with UK Government colleagues to ensure Northern Ireland continues to be represented and considered for investment opportunities. In addition to this, I will also speak to Minister Diane Dodds about current developments at InfraStrata and Harland & Wolff.

I look forward to visiting Harland & Wolff in the near future and my officials will be in touch to make arrangements in due course.

Yours sincerely,

THE RT HON BRANDON LEWIS CBE MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

[REDACTED]

InfraStrata
8th Floor Northern & Shell Building
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Minister of State
Department for Business,
Energy & Industrial Strategy
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London
SW1H 0ET

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000
E enquiries@beis.gov.uk
W www.gov.uk

Our ref: MCB2020/37085

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Please do continue to keep my officials informed of developments, although as you are aware, the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland retain responsibility for energy. As with previous correspondence, I am copying this to the Rt Hon Brandon Lewis CBE MP, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

Yours ever,

RT HON KWASI KWARTENG MP
Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth

Cc Rt Hon Brandon Lewis CBE MP

Orange Lodge

Dear [REDACTED],

Following last week's agreement, the Minister of State for Northern Ireland, Robin Walker MP would like to hold a call with you to discuss the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Would you be free tomorrow for a call at 2pm?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Would welcome a conversation, unfortunately I have meetings arranged tomorrow between 12 noon and 4 pm. Could do the morning or 4 pm.

[REDACTED]

Thanks [REDACTED],

Would 11am tomorrow morning work ok?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

11 am fine – Zoom or just audio.

Thanks [REDACTED]

Zoom would be preferable, please see the details below:

Join Zoom Meeting

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Great will click in at 11 am

Thanks

Royal Black Preceptory

Dear [REDACTED],

Following last week's agreement, the Minister of State for Northern Ireland, Robin Walker MP would like to hold a call with you to discuss the Northern Ireland Protocol and the views of the Royal Black Preceptory.

Would you be free tomorrow for a call at 2:30pm?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] - Thank you for your email. I am available at 2.30 pm tomorrow afternoon and will keep this time free. Regards. [REDACTED]

Thanks [REDACTED],

Please see the Zoom details for the meeting below:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

If you've any issues please let me know.

[REDACTED]

Apprentice Boys of Derry

Dear [REDACTED],

Following last week's agreement, the Minister of State for Northern Ireland, Robin Walker MP would like to hold a call with you to discuss the Northern Ireland Protocol and the views of the Apprentice Boys of Derry.

Would you be free tomorrow for a call at 3pm?

[REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED],

Members of the Apprentice Boys Association will be pleased to participate in a conversation with Minister Walker tomorrow (Tuesday) at 3.00pm. I presume the conversation will take place via Zoom, similar to our last meeting with the Minister.

Those participating are as follows;

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I trust you will facilitate the discussion by forwarding the link to the above representatives.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for your email. Appreciate the advice on who will be attending. Please see the Zoom details for the meeting below:

Join Zoom Meeting

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

If you've any issues please let me know.

Annex A – Information being released (with section 40(2) (personal data) redacted)

11 May 2021

Colleagues,

Inclusivity matters. It is one of our core values as a department and we continue to strive for a culture which enables everyone to bring their whole self to work, to thrive and be supported. Over the next year, I want us to be more proactive in our approach to inclusivity, more ambitious in the

standards we hold ourselves to and more mindful of the experiences of colleagues from different backgrounds, traditions, and personal situations.

To kick off a series of conversations on all areas of inclusivity, one year on from the brutal murder of George Floyd and the protests and discussions that followed, I would like to invite you to a further discussion on the experiences of BAME colleagues in the NIO.

Over the past year we have taken a number of steps aimed at making the department more reflective of the community we serve. This means, in addition to attracting staff from a range of backgrounds, ensuring that everyone feels valued and supported in their roles and that the NIO is somewhere everyone can realise their potential. Central to this is improving our understanding of the experiences of BAME colleagues in the NIO, the civil service and in wider society. This is not just a matter for HR or our Diversity and Inclusion Group. It is a matter for all of us.

██████████ will be sending out meeting invites shortly - please keep an eye out in your inbox and join us if you can.

██████████

Section 40

From: Section 40
Sent: 21 May 2021 07:53
To: NIO FOI
Subject: FOI Meeting Information

Hi NIO IMU,

If you could provide **all information** relating to the meeting between Brandon Lewis and the Loyalist Communities Council and Paramilitary Representatives held earlier this month. As part of this could you provide the names and organisations represented for all attendees as is expected under government transparency rules and notes of the meeting.

Kind Regards

Section 40

Section 40

From: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 May 2021 14:14
To: Section 40
Subject: Freedom of Information request - FOI/21/86 - Section 40 acknowledgement

Dear Section 40

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 21/05/21 to the Northern Ireland Office.

Your request is being handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We will endeavour to respond to your request within the twenty-working day deadline provided by section 10(1) of the Act and no later than 21/06/21.

If you have any queries, please contact us at our email address. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of information Team

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Section 40
Date: Fri, 21 May 2021 at 07:52
Subject: FOI Meeting Information
To: NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Hi NIO IMU,

If you could provide **all information** relating to the meeting between Brandon Lewis and the Loyalist Communities Council and Paramilitary Representatives held earlier this month. As part of this could you provide the names and organisations represented for all attendees as is expected under government transparency rules and notes of the meeting.

Kind Regards

Section 40

Section 40

From: Section 40 on behalf of NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 May 2021 14:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: New FOI allocation - FOI/21/86 - [REDACTED] - SoS meeting with LCC

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

Please see new FOI request reference FOI/21/86 below; I would be grateful if you can confirm if you can deal with this request. Also copying [REDACTED] into this request for his thoughts.

Our 20 day deadline is 21/06/21, please forward a DD cleared response to the FOI inbox by 07/06/21.

Please let myself or one of the team know if you need anything further.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Freedom of Information Team
Corporate Operations Group
1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ
Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH
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From: Section 40 <Section 40>
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Kind Regards

Section 40

Section 40

From: Section 40@nio.gov.uk on behalf of SOS Lewis <Section 40@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 May 2021 19:18
To: NIO FOI
Cc: PS SOS; Section 40; SOS Lewis
Subject: Re: New FOI allocation - FOI/21/86 - Section 40 meeting with LCC

Section 40

Please see a [draft response](#) for this FOI.

Section 36

Section 40

On Fri, 21 May 2021 at 14:29, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:
Thanks Section 40 for the clarification on this one.

Section 40 We know if you need anything else on this one.

Kinds regards

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

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On Fri, 21 May 2021 at 14:23, Section 40 Section 40@nio.gov.uk wrote:

Section 36

Cheers

Section 40

On Fri, 21 May 2021 at 14:21, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:
Good afternoon Section 40

Please see new FOI request reference FOI/21/86 below; I would be grateful if you can confirm if you can deal with this request. Also copying Section 40 into this request for his thoughts.

Our 20 day deadline is 21/06/21, please forward a DD cleared response to the FOI inbox by 07/06/21.

Please let myself or one of the team know if you need anything further.

Kind regards,

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

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Kind Regards

Section 40

--
Section 40

Section 40

Political Affairs Group

T Section 40 M Section 40

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "PS SOS" group.
To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to
Section40@nio.gov.uk.

To view this discussion on the web, visit

https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/Section40/CAGSg_wHa8VxzCsG74t_pQNw3NYST9SWjf7KgPw6OVbU_Xn_Jg%40mail.gmail.com.



NIO Private Office

1 Horse Guards Road, London
Stormont House, Belfast

Section40@nio.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/nio

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Section 40

From: Section 40 on behalf of Section 40 >
Sent: 09 June 2021 13:33
To: NIO FOI
Cc: Section 40
Subject: Re: New FOI allocation - FOI/21/86 - Section 40 - SoS meeting with LCC

Section 40

Section 40 has cleared this response, can you please take forward.

Section 40

On Tue, 25 May 2021 at 19:17, Section 40 > wrote:

Section 40

Please see a draft response for this FOI.

Section 36

Section 40

On Fri, 21 May 2021 at 14:29, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Thanks Section 40 for the clarification on this one.

Section 40 Let me know if you need anything else on this one.

Kinds regards

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Fri, 21 May 2021 at 14:23, Section 40 > wrote:

Section 36

Cheers

Section 40

On Fri, 21 May 2021 at 14:21, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Good afternoon Section 40

Please see new FOI request reference FOI/21/86 below; I would be grateful if you can confirm if you can deal with this request. Also copying Section 40 into this request for his thoughts.

Our 20 day deadline is 21/06/21, please forward a DD cleared response to the FOI inbox by 07/06/21.

Please let myself or one of the team know if you need anything further.

Kind regards,

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Section 40 <Section 40>

Date: Fri, 21 May 2021 at 07:52

Subject: FOI Meeting Information

To: NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Hi NIO IMU,

If you could provide **all information** relating to the meeting between Brandon Lewis and the Loyalist Communities Council and Paramilitary Representatives held earlier this month. As part of this could you provide the names and organisations represented for all attendees as is expected under government transparency rules and notes of the meeting.

Kind Regards

Section 40

--
Section 40

Section 40

Political Affairs Group

T Section 40 M Section 40

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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unsubscribe@nio.gov.uk.

To view this discussion on the web, visit

https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/Section-40/CAGSg_wHa8VxzCsG74t_pQNw3NYST9SWjF7KgPw6OVbU_Xn_Jg%40mail.gmail.com.



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1 Horse Guards Road, London
Stormont House, Belfast

Section 40

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Section 40

From: Section 40 <[redacted]@nio.gov.uk> on behalf of NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 June 2021 14:13
To: SOS Lewis
Cc: PS SOS; Section 40
Subject: Re: New FOI allocation - FOI/21/86 - [redacted] - SoS meeting with LCC

Great thanks Section 40.

Kind regards

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Wed, 9 Jun 2021 at 13:33, SOS Lewis <[redacted]> wrote:

Section 40

Section 36

Section 40

On Tue, 25 May 2021 at 19:17, SOS Lewis <[redacted]> wrote:

Section 40

Please see a [draft response](#) for this FOI.

Section 36

Section 40

On Fri, 21 May 2021 at 14:29, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Section 40

Section 40 We know if you need anything else on this one.

Kinds regards

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Fri, 21 May 2021 at 14:23, Section 40 <Section 40@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Section 36

Cheers

Section 40

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Our 20 day deadline is 21/06/21, please forward a DD cleared response to the FOI inbox by 07/06/21.

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Kind regards,

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: Section 40 <Section 40>

Date: Fri, 21 May 2021 at 07:52

Subject: FOI Meeting Information
To: NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Hi NIO IMU,

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Kind Regards

Section 40

--
Section 40

Section 40

Political Affairs Group

T Section 40 M Section 40

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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[https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/Section 40/CAGSg_wHa8VxzCsG74t_pQNw3NYST9SWjfF7KgPw6OVbU_Xn_Jg%40mail.gmail.com](https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/Section%2040/CAGSg_wHa8VxzCsG74t_pQNw3NYST9SWjfF7KgPw6OVbU_Xn_Jg%40mail.gmail.com).

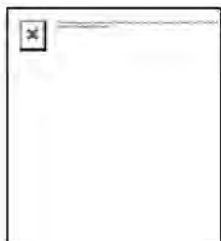


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Stormont House, Belfast

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Section 40

From: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 June 2021 17:31
To: Section 40
Subject: FOI/21/86 - - response
Attachments: FOI 21 86 - - response.pdf

Dear Section 40

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/86.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team
Corporate Operations Group
Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH
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Section 40

From: Section 40 <Section 40>
Sent: 21 June 2021 18:30
To: FOI
Subject: Re: FOI/21/86 - [REDACTED] - response

Hi,

Many thanks for your response.

If you could forward this on for internal review on the basis that the request was for all information - information pertaining to the organisation of the meeting would not fall under the exemption of formulation of policy.

Further as the LCC would represent paramilitary organisations and particular spokespeople have admitted membership of proscribed organisations, it would be an offence to attend a meeting which is addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation. It would therefore be in the public interest to know if the Minister has broken the law by attending a meeting which was addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation.

Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 17:31, FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Section 40

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/86.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

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Section 40

From: Section 40 <Section 40>
Sent: 22 June 2021 09:36
To: FOI
Subject: Re: FOI/21/86 - [redacted] - response

Following on from this request for an internal review the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP which would be a "significant win" for unionists.

For the use of exemption s35, a decision can not have been made. It appears that if these assurances have been given the department could not use s35 as an exemption as a decision had been made.

Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 18:29, Section 40 <Section 40> wrote:
Hi,

Many thanks for your response.

If you could forward this on for internal review on the basis that the request was for all information - information pertaining to the organisation of the meeting would not fall under the exemption of formulation of policy.

Further as the LCC would represent paramilitary organisations and particular spokespeople have admitted membership of proscribed organisations, it would be an offence to attend a meeting which is addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation. It would therefore be in the public interest to know if the Minister has broken the law by attending a meeting which was addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation.

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Section 40

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Dear Section 40

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Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team
Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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Northern



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NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

AP/21/15 - Section 40 Internal review response

FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

23 June 2021 at 10:43

To: Section 40

Bcc: foi@nio.gov.uk

Dear Section 40

Thank you for your emails dated 21 and 22 June 2021, in relation to your request for an internal review into the way the Department handled your request for information under reference: FOI/21/86.

Your request is being handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We will endeavour to inform you of the outcome of your internal review no later than the 21/07/21.

The review of your request will consist of an analysis of the handling of your request by an independent official who was not involved in handling your original request. If the original decision is overturned, the request will be re-visited and any information, if held, released to you, entirely or in part. If the original decision is upheld, you will receive a letter from the Freedom of Information team detailing the reasons why we are unable to provide the information requested.

If on receipt of our response you are still not satisfied, you can make a further appeal to the Information Commissioner. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Further information about the role of the Information Commissioner and the appeals process can be found at www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter with us, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager

Freedom of information Team
Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [redacted] >
Date: Tue, 22 Jun 2021 at 09:36
Subject: Re: FOI/21/86 - [redacted] response
To: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Following on from this request for an internal review the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP which would be a "significant win" for unionists.

For the use of exemption s35, a decision can not have been made. It appears that if these assurances have been given the department could not use s35 as an exemption as a decision had been made.

Kind Regards

[redacted]

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 18:29, [redacted] > wrote:
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Many thanks for your response.

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Kind Regards

[redacted]

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 17:31, FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear [redacted]

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/86.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

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NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Re: AP/21/15 - Section 40 Internal review request

SOS Lewis <Section 40>

23 June 2021 at 11:55

To: NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Cc: PS SOS <Section 40>, Section 40 <Section 40>, Section 40 <Section 40>, Section 40 <Section 40>, Section 40 <Section 40>, Section 40 <Section 40>, SOS Lewis <Section 40>

Thanks Section 40

Section 40 can one of you take forward this review please.

Section 40 for awareness on Mr. Section 40 that:

"the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP. For the use of exemption s35, a decision can not have been made. It appears that if these assurances have been given the department could not use s35 as an exemption as a decision had been made".

Section 36

Section 40

On Wed, 23 Jun 2021 at 10:54, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Good morning Section 40 and team,

Please see below internal review request AP/21/15 from Section 40 regarding his response to FOI/21/86 (attached).

Section 36

Please come back to myself or one of the team if you need anything clarified or further information,

Many thanks in advance,

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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From: **Section 40** >
Date: Tue, 22 Jun 2021 at 09:36
Subject: Re: FOI/21/86 - **Section 40** response
To: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Following on from this request for an internal review the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP which would be a "significant win" for unionists.

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Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 18:29, **Section 40** > wrote:

Hi,

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Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 17:31, FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear **Section 40**

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/86.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

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Section 40 unsubscribe@nio.gov.uk.

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Stormont House, Belfast

Section 40

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NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

23 June 2021 at 12:13

To: SOS Lewis <[REDACTED]>

Cc: PS SOS <[REDACTED]>, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>, [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>

Secret@nio.gov.uk>, Secret@nio.gov.uk>, Secret@nio.gov.uk>

Bcc: NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Section 3Section 40

Please let myself or one of the FOI team know if you require anything further.

Kind regards

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Wed, 23 Jun 2021 at 11:56, SOS Lewis <Section 40> wrote:

Thanks **Section 40**

Section 36

Section 104 for awareness on Mr. Section 104's point that:

"the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP. For the use of exemption s35, a decision can not have been made. It appears that if these assurances have been given the department could not use s35 as an exemption as a decision had been made".

Section 40

On Wed, 23 Jun 2021 at 10:54, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Good morning **Section** and team,

Please see below internal review request AP/21/15 from **SeSe** regarding his response to FOI/21/86 (attached).

Section 40

Could you please allocate this to a member of your team or staff not involved in the previous FOI response/

Section 36



Please come back to myself or one of the team if you need anything clarified or further information,

Many thanks in advance,

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

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From: Section 40 >

Date: Tue, 22 Jun 2021 at 09:36

Subject: Re: FOI/21/86 - Section 40 response

To: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

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Kind Regards

[redacted] Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 17:31, FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear [redacted] Section 40

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/86.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team
Corporate Operations Group

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To view this discussion on the web, visit [https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/\[redacted\] Section 40 CAGSg_wFv5Fb2sN1bTn8e5XydBp%3D6Ce3Pk4M5Xhkpthjae35nCw%40mail.gmail.com](https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/[redacted] Section 40 CAGSg_wFv5Fb2sN1bTn8e5XydBp%3D6Ce3Pk4M5Xhkpthjae35nCw%40mail.gmail.com).



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[redacted] Section 40

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NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Out of office Re: AP/21/15 - Section 40 Internal review request

Section 40, Section 40, Section 40
To: foi@nio.gov.uk

16 July 2021 at 12:00

Thank you for your email.

Section 40

Section 40

For anything else, **Section 40** is your first point of contact.

Please keep **Ser1** on gov.uk copied.

Otherwise, I will respond as soon as possible on my return.

Many thanks,

Section 40

Section 40

Section 40

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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Northern
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Office

NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Re: AP/21/15 - **Section 40 Internal review request**

NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

20 July 2021 at 11:59

To: SOS Lewis <**Section 40**>, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Hello **Section 40**

Section 36

A large rectangular area of the email body is completely redacted with a solid black box. The text 'Section 36' is visible at the top left corner of this redacted area.

Section 36

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

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On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 10:03, SOS Lewis <Section 40> wrote:

Sounds good, my number is Section 40

Section 40

On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 10:00, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Of course. I am just popping into a meeting now but should be free at 11?

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On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 09:57, SOS Lewis <Section 40> wrote:

Hi Section 40

Sounds good. Can I also possible give you a quick call on this one this morning?

Thanks,

Section 40

On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 09:40, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hello All,

Section 36

Thanks.

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On Fri, 16 Jul 2021 at 11:59, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hello All,

I was just wondering if there is any update with respect to this internal review?

Section 36

Thanks!

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

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On Thu, 8 Jul 2021 at 08:55, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear All,

I was just wondering if you had the opportunity to consider this internal review? The deadline for a response to the applicant is the **21 July 2021**. I would therefore be grateful for a cleared final internal review **well before this date**.

If you have any questions or need any other advice please feel free to drop me a line.

Thank you.

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Wed, 23 Jun 2021 at 12:13, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Section 36

Really useful so thank you!

Please let myself or one of the FOI team know if you require anything further.

Kind regards

Section 40

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Thanks [Section 40]

[Section 40] Band As can one of you take forward this review please.

[Section 40] for awareness on Mr. [Section 40] point that:

"the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP. For the use of exemption s35, a decision can not have been made. It appears that if these assurances have been given the department could not use s35 as an exemption as a decision had been made".

[Section 36]

[Section 40]

On Wed, 23 Jun 2021 at 10:54, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Good morning [Section 40] and team,

Please see below internal review request AP/21/15 from [Section 40] regarding his response to FOI/21/86 (attached).

Could you please allocate this to a member of your team or staff not involved in the previous FOI

[Section 36]

Please come back to myself or one of the team if you need anything clarified or further information,

Many thanks in advance,

[Section 40]

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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From: **Section 40** >
 Date: Tue, 22 Jun 2021 at 09:36
 Subject: Re: FOI/21/86 - **Section 40** response
 To: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Following on from this request for an internal review the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP which would be a "significant win" for unionists.

For the use of exemption s35, a decision can not have been made. It appears that if these assurances have been given the department could not use s35 as an exemption as a decision had been made.

Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 18:29, **Section 40** > wrote:
 Hi,

Many thanks for your response.

If you could forward this on for internal review on the basis that the request was for all information - information pertaining to the organisation of the meeting would not fall under the exemption of formulation of policy.

Further as the LCC would represent paramilitary organisations and particular spokespeople have admitted membership of proscribed organisations, it would be an offence to attend a meeting which is addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation. It would therefore be in the public interest to know if the Minister has broken the law by attending a meeting which was addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation.

Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 17:31, FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear **Section 40**

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/86.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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--
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Section 40 <unsubscribe@nio.gov.uk>.

To view this discussion on the web, visit [https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/Section 40 CAGSg_wFv5Fb2sN1bTn8e5XydBp%3D6Ce3Pk4M5Xhkpthjae35nCw%40mail.gmail.com](https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/Section%2040/CAGSg_wFv5Fb2sN1bTn8e5XydBp%3D6Ce3Pk4M5Xhkpthjae35nCw%40mail.gmail.com).



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Section 40

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AP 21-15 Draft.DOCX

48K



Northern
Ireland
Office

NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Re: FOI/21/86 - **Section 40** response

Section 40 >
To: FOI Inbox <foi@nio.gov.uk>

20 July 2021 at 13:38

Many thanks for your holding response.

Can you clarify the reason for the delay? ICO advice states that only in exceptional circumstances should an internal review exceed 20 days.

The department has now issued two internal review extension letters for two separate FOI requests.

Kind Regards

Section 40

On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 12:53, FOI Inbox <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear **Section 40**

Thank you for your recent internal review request with respect to the Department's response to Freedom of Information request NIO 21/86. The Department is still finalising your internal review and unfortunately we will not be able to make the originally planned deadline. Please find attached further information with respect to this delay.

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 18:30, **Section 40** >
Hi,

Many thanks for your response.

If you could forward this on for internal review on the basis that the request was for all information - information pertaining to the organisation of the meeting would not fall under the exemption of formulation of policy.

Further as the LCC would represent paramilitary organisations and particular spokespeople have admitted membership of proscribed organisations, it would be an offence to attend a meeting which is addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation. It would therefore be in the public interest to know if the Minister has broken the law by attending a meeting which was addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation.

Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 17:31, FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear **Section 40**

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/86.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team
Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Re: AP/21/15 - Section 40 Internal review request

SOS Lewis <Section 40>

To: NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

29 July 2021 at 10:09

Hi Section 40

Section 36

Section 40

On Thu, 29 Jul 2021 at 09:41, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hello Section 40

Section 36

The deadline for a reply is the 19 August 2021. However we have extended this deadline once so from a customer service point of view if we can get the response to the applicant sooner rather than later that would be great!

Thanks again and if you need anything else please do let me know.

Freedom of information Team

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On Thu, 29 Jul 2021 at 09:12, SOS Lewis <Section 40> wrote:

Hi Section 40

Section 36

Thanks,

Section 40

On Thu, 29 Jul 2021 at 07:57, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Thank you Section 40

Section 36

Section 36

**Freedom of information Team**

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Wed, 28 Jul 2021 at 17:24, SOS Lewis <Section 40> wrote:

Hi Section 40

Section 36



Best wishes,

Section 40

On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 12:00, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hello Section 40

Section 36



Section 36

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 10:03, SOS Lewis <[Section 40](#)> wrote:

Sounds good, my number is Section 40.

Section 40

On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 10:00, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Of course. I am just popping into a meeting now but should be free at 11?

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

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On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 09:57, SOS Lewis <Section 40> wrote:

Hi Section 40

Sounds good. Can I also possible give you a quick call on this one this morning?

Thanks,

Section 40

On Tue, 20 Jul 2021 at 09:40, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hello All,

Section 36

Thanks.

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Fri, 16 Jul 2021 at 11:59, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hello All,

Section 36

Section 36

Thanks!

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Thu, 8 Jul 2021 at 08:55, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear All,

Section 36

If you have any questions or need any other advice please feel free to drop me a line.

Thank you.

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Wed, 23 Jun 2021 at 12:13, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Section 36

Please let myself or one of the FOI team know if you require anything further.

Kind regards

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Wed, 23 Jun 2021 at 11:56, SOS Lewis <Section 40> wrote:

Thanks Section 40

Section 40 Mr P O Band As can one of you take forward this review please.

Section 40 for awareness on Mr. Section 40's point that:

"the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP. For the use of exemption s35, a decision can not have been made. It appears that if these assurances have been given the department could not use s35 as an exemption as a decision had been made".

Section 36

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Section 36

Section 36

Section 36

Section 40

On Wed, 23 Jun 2021 at 10:54, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Good morning Section 40 and team,

Please see below internal review request AP/21/15 from Section 40 regarding his response to FOI/21/86 (attached).

Could you please allocate this to a member of your team or staff not involved in the previous

Section 36

Please come back to myself or one of the team if you need anything clarified or further information,

Many thanks in advance,

Section 40

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

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From: Section 40
 Date: Tue, 22 Jun 2021 at 09:36
 Subject: Re: FOI/21/86 - Section 40 response
 To: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Following on from this request for an internal review the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP which would be a "significant win" for unionists.

For the use of exemption s35, a decision can not have been made. It appears that if these assurances have been given the department could not use s35 as an exemption as a decision had been made.

Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 18:29, Section 40 wrote:
 Hi,

Many thanks for your response.

If you could forward this on for internal review on the basis that the request was for all information - information pertaining to the organisation of the meeting would not fall under the exemption of formulation of policy.

Further as the LCC would represent paramilitary organisations and particular spokespeople have admitted membership of proscribed organisations, it would be an offence to attend a meeting which is addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation. It would therefore be in the public interest to know if the Minister has broken the law by attending a meeting which was addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation.

Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 17:31, FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Section 40

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/86.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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Section 40 unsubscribe@nio.gov.uk.

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NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Re: AP/21/15 - Section 40 Internal review response

FOI Inbox <foi@nio.gov.uk>

2 August 2021 at 11:32

To: NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>, Section 40

Dear Section 40

Thank you for your email. The internal review process for your enquiry FOI/21/86 is now complete. The mechanisms for complaining against a Freedom of Information request are quite clear and it is not possible to undertake a secondary internal review. Should you still be dissatisfied with the way your original enquiry (FOI/21/86) was handled and the outcomes of the subsequent internal review (AP21/15) details were supplied to you as to how to contact the independent regulator of the Freedom of Information Act, the Information Commissioner. For reference they are again supplied below. Additionally the Department, within internal review AP12/15, explained the reasons why the original request was now, at internal review stage, being refused by way of section 12 (appropriate limit) of the Freedom of Information Act; that is to say when the original wording is taken into account this would require a system wide review of all electronic and paper records held by the Department.

Internal review AP21/15 also supplied advice and assistance, as required by section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act, as to how you might wish to consider re-framing your request under the appropriate limit. Therefore it is not possible for the Department to undertake a further, secondary internal review into FOI/21/86 and it is the Department position that the previously supplied internal review - AP21/15 - closings this request. The onus to re-submit a request or instigate an Information Commissioners Case rests with you as the applicant.

I can understand how this may seem insensitive or overly bureaucratic however the Department, as are all public authorities, are bound by the Act and complaint mechanisms.

Information Commissioner's Office contact details (as supplied in our original internal review AP21/15)

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner is an independent regulator who has the power to direct us to respond to your request differently, if he considers that we have handled it incorrectly.

You can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
www.ico.org.uk

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Mon, 2 Aug 2021 at 08:01, [redacted] > wrote:
Many thanks for your response.

As you have now implemented a new exemption. Can you proceed with internal review against the new exemption on the basis that the departments records management is so poor that would require such searches to locate information about a specific meeting.

Kind Regards

[redacted]

On Mon, 2 Aug 2021 at 07:55, FOI Inbox <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:
Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your recent internal review request with respect to the Department's previous Freedom of Information response given reference number FOI/21/86; please find attached the Department's final internal review.

I trust this information is of some use to you and I wish you all the best with your research.

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Wed, 23 Jun 2021 at 10:44, FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:
Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your emails dated 21 and 22 June 2021, in relation to your request for an internal review into the way the Department handled your request for information under reference: FOI/21/86.

Your request is being handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We will endeavour to inform you of the outcome of your internal review no later than the 21/07/21.

The review of your request will consist of an analysis of the handling of your request by an independent official who was not involved in handling your original request. If the original decision is overturned, the request will be re-visited and any information, if held, released to you, entirely or in part. If the original decision is upheld, you will receive a letter from the Freedom of Information team detailing the reasons why we are unable to provide the information requested.

If on receipt of our response you are still not satisfied, you can make a further appeal to the Information Commissioner. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Further information about the role of the Information Commissioner and the appeals process can be found at www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter with us, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager

Freedom of information Team
Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [redacted] >
Date: Tue, 22 Jun 2021 at 09:36
Subject: Re: FOI/21/86 - [redacted] response
To: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Following on from this request for an internal review the former leader of the DUP Edwin Poots has stated on GMU that he received assurances from Brandon Lewis that there would be "very significant" changes to the NIP which would be a "significant win" for unionists.

For the use of exemption s35, a decision can not have been made. It appears that if these assurances have been given the department could not use s35 as an exemption as a decision had been made.

Kind Regards

[redacted]

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 18:29, [redacted] > wrote:
Hi,

Many thanks for your response.

If you could forward this on for internal review on the basis that the request was for all information - information pertaining to the organisation of the meeting would not fall under the exemption of formulation of policy.

Further as the LCC would represent paramilitary organisations and particular spokespeople have admitted membership of proscribed organisations, it would be an offence to attend a meeting which is addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation. It would therefore be in the public interest

Section 40

to know if the Minister has broken the law by attending a meeting which was addressed by a known member of a proscribed organisation.

Kind Regards

Section 40

On Mon, 21 Jun 2021 at 17:31, FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Section 40

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/86.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

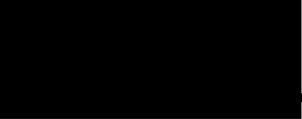
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From: 
Sent: 13 April 2021 14:14
To: FOI requests at NIO
Subject: Freedom of Information request - Ministerial diaries

Dear Northern Ireland Office,

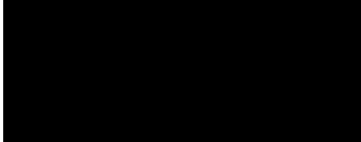
This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. I would like to request the following information:

From 13th February 2020 to the day this request is processed, please provide a copy of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis's ministerial diaries.

Please note, I am making this request out of the public interest. It is absolutely essential for the public to know - in full detail - the calls, events and meetings that took place across the year when the pandemic gripped the UK and beyond.

I would like to receive this information in an electronic format. If you feel that a substantive response to this request is not possible within a reasonable time frame, I would be grateful if you could contact me and provide assistance as to how I can refine the request. If you need any clarification, please contact me. I look forward to receiving a response in 20 working days. Many thanks.

Yours faithfully,



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https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change_request/new?body=nio

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<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/help/ico-guidance-for-authorities>

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From: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 April 2021 10:48
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Freedom of Information request - FOI/21/67 - [REDACTED] - acknowledgement

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 13/04/21 to the Northern Ireland Office.

Your request is being handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We will endeavour to respond to your request within the twenty-working day deadline provided by section 10(1) of the Act and no later than 11/05/21.

If you have any queries, please contact us at our email address. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of information Team

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 13 Apr 2021 at 14:14
Subject: Freedom of Information request - Ministerial diaries
To: FOI requests at NIO <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Dear Northern Ireland Office,

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. I would like to request the following information:

From 13th February 2020 to the day this request is processed, please provide a copy of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis's ministerial diaries.

Please note, I am making this request out of the public interest. It is absolutely essential for the public to know - in full detail - the calls, events and meetings that took place across the year when the pandemic gripped the UK and beyond.

I would like to receive this information in an electronic format. If you feel that a substantive response to this request is not possible within a reasonable time frame, I would be grateful if you could contact me and provide assistance as to how I can refine the request. If you need any clarification, please contact me. I look forward to receiving a response in 20 working days. Many thanks.

Yours faithfully,



Please use this email address for all replies to this request:



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https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change_request/new?body=nio

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<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/help/ico-guidance-for-authorities>

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If you find this service useful as an FOI officer, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's FOI page.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 April 2021 10:51
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: New FOI allocation - FOI/21/67 - [REDACTED] Ministerial diaries

Hi [REDACTED] and team,

Please see new FOI request reference FOI/21/67 below; I would be grateful if you can confirm if you can deal.

Our 20 day deadline is 11/05/21, please forward a DD cleared response to the FOI inbox by 27/04/21.

Please let myself or one of the team know if you need anything further.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Freedom of information Team
Corporate Operations Group
1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ
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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 13 Apr 2021 at 14:14
Subject: Freedom of Information request - Ministerial diaries
To: FOI requests at NIO <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Dear Northern Ireland Office,

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. I would like to request the following information:

From 13th February 2020 to the day this request is processed, please provide a copy of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis's ministerial diaries.

Please note, I am making this request out of the public interest. It is absolutely essential for the public to know - in full detail - the calls, events and meetings that took place across the year when the pandemic gripped the UK and beyond.

I would like to receive this information in an electronic format. If you feel that a substantive response to this request is not possible within a reasonable time frame, I would be grateful if you could contact me and provide assistance as to how I can refine the request. If you need any clarification, please contact me. I look forward to receiving a response in 20 working days. Many thanks.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

Please use this email address for all replies to this request:

[Redacted email address]

Is foi@nio.gov.uk the wrong address for Freedom of Information requests to Northern Ireland Office? If so, please contact us using this form:

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change_request/new?body=nio

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[REDACTED]

From: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 May 2021 16:35
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FOI/21/67 - [REDACTED] - response
Attachments: FOI 21 67 - [REDACTED] - response.pdf

Dear [REDACTED]

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/67.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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Dear [REDACTED]

12 May 2021

REFERENCE: FOI/21/67

Thank you for your email dated 13 April 2021 in which you requested the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

"I would like to request the following information:

From 13th February 2020 to the day this request is processed, please provide a copy of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis's ministerial diaries.

Please note, I am making this request out of the public interest. It is absolutely essential for the public to know - in full detail - the calls, events and meetings that took place across the year when the pandemic gripped the UK and beyond".

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I am writing to inform you that the Northern Ireland Office will not be taking your request any further, as we consider that compliance with your request would impose a grossly oppressive burden on the Office. This consideration has been made with reference to the exemption outlined in Section 14 (1) of the FOIA (2000).

In determining that our response to your request would impose this burden, the Northern Ireland Office has considered your request against the Information Commissioner's Office's (ICO) Section 14 guidance. A copy of this guidance can be found on the ICO website, via the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1198/dealing-with-vexatious-requests>.

The Northern Ireland Office considers that the provision of a response to your request would impose a grossly oppressive burden on our resources, as to do so would require the extraction and collation of a considerable volume of information.

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.



If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager



From: [REDACTED] on behalf of NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 07 May 2021 15:22
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: NIO FOI
Subject: Re: FOI/21/67 - [REDACTED] - Ministerial diaries

Forwarded the wrong email, correct one below, it's probably all on the same chain

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Thu, 6 May 2021 at 10:22, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Good morning [REDACTED]

Section 36

Hope your keeping well, with regards your response for this one, [REDACTED]

Kind regards
[REDACTED]

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Wed, 28 Apr 2021 at 10:18, [REDACTED] wrote:
Hi [REDACTED]

Please see the cleared response for this FOI.

On Wed, 14 Apr 2021 at 10:51, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:
Hi [REDACTED] and team,

Please see new FOI request reference FOI/21/67 below; I would be grateful if you can confirm if you can deal.

Our 20 day deadline is 11/05/21, please forward a DD cleared response to the FOI inbox by 27/04/21.

Please let myself or one of the team know if you need anything further.

Kind regards,

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 13 Apr 2021 at 14:14
Subject: Freedom of Information request - Ministerial diaries
To: FOI requests at NIO <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Dear Northern Ireland Office,

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. I would like to request the following information:

From 13th February 2020 to the day this request is processed, please provide a copy of Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis's ministerial diaries.

Please note, I am making this request out of the public interest. It is absolutely essential for the public to know - in full detail - the calls, events and meetings that took place across the year when the pandemic gripped the UK and beyond.

I would like to receive this information in an electronic format. If you feel that a substantive response to this request is not possible within a reasonable time frame, I would be grateful if you could contact me and provide assistance as to how I can refine the request. If you need any clarification, please contact me. I look forward to receiving a response in 20 working days. Many thanks.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Please use this email address for all replies to this request:

[REDACTED]

Is foi@nio.gov.uk the wrong address for Freedom of Information requests to Northern Ireland Office? If so, please contact us using this form:

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change_request/new?body=nio

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--

You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "PS SOS" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to

ps.sos+unsubscribe@nio.gov.uk.

To view this discussion on the web, visit

https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/ps.sos/CAGSg_wHGtXxZW%3D5hJd9p0p%2BiH73O0caw6Pmky%2BhC6Hjq4KX3Kg%40mail.gmail.com.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
1 Horse Guards Road, London
Stormont House, Belfast

[REDACTED]
www.gov.uk/nio

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From: [redacted] on behalf of NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 16 April 2021 11:27
To: [redacted]
Cc: [redacted] NIO FOI
Subject: Re: New FOI allocation - FOI/21/67 - [redacted] Ministerial diaries

Hi [redacted]
as discussed, could you write a Public Interest paragraph for this one too please?

Many thanks,
[redacted]

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Fri, 16 Apr 2021 at 11:03, [redacted] wrote:
Thanks [redacted]

Please see the attached response DD cleared.

On Thu, 15 Apr 2021 at 14:31, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi [redacted]

Section 36

Let us know if you need anything further.

Kind regards,
[redacted]

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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On Thu, 15 Apr 2021 at 13:56, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

Section 36

On Wed, 14 Apr 2021 at 10:51, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED] and team,

Please see new FOI request reference FOI/21/67 below; I would be grateful if you can confirm if you can deal.

Our 20 day deadline is 11/05/21, please forward a DD cleared response to the FOI inbox by 27/04/21.

Please let myself or one of the team know if you need anything further.

Kind regards,

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Apr 2021 at 14:14

Subject: Freedom of Information request - Ministerial diaries

To: FOI requests at NIO <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Dear Northern Ireland Office,

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. I would like to request the following information:

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State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis's ministerial diaries.

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I would like to receive this information in an electronic format. If you feel that a substantive response to this request is not possible within a reasonable time frame, I would be grateful if you could contact me and provide assistance as to how I can refine the request. If you need any clarification, please contact me. I look forward to receiving a response in 20 working days. Many thanks.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

Please use this email address for all replies to this request:

[Redacted email address]

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https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change_request/new?body=nio

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--

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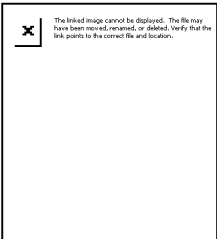
To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to

ps.sos+unsubscribe@nio.gov.uk.

To view this discussion on the web, visit

https://groups.google.com/a/nio.gov.uk/d/msgid/ps.sos/CAGSg_wHGtXxZW%3D5hJd9p0p%2BiH73O0caw6Pmky%2BhC6Hjq4KX3Kg%40mail.gmail.com.

--

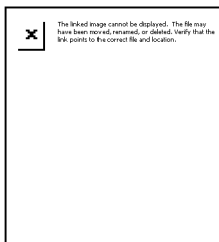


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From:

on behalf of ClearingHouse mailbox

Sent:

12 May 2021 14:55

To:

NIO FOI

Subject:

Re: Ministerial diaries - Draft for clearance (NIO - FOI/21/67)

Hi

Thanks for sending through your revised draft - we are content.

Kind regards



Cabinet Office

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When corresponding with the Cabinet Office, you may wish to be aware of how we treat your personal Information. This is set out in our personal information charter, at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/cabinet-office/about/personal-information-charter>

On Wed, 12 May 2021 at 11:05, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi

Section 36

Grateful if you and team can confirm that you are content and we can issue today to meet our deadline.

Kind regards

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Wed, 12 May 2021 at 10:08, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Good morning [REDACTED]

I have passed your comments on to our Private Office team who would like me to issue a letter of extension to [REDACTED] today to further consider the PIT re: section 35.

I will forward their re-draft when cleared by their Deputy Director.

Section 36

Kind regards

[REDACTED]
Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Tue, 11 May 2021 at 16:52, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks - we think you're fine to extend it. [REDACTED]

Kind regards

Section 36



Cabinet Office

Clearing House

E: [REDACTED]

T: [REDACTED]

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On Tue, 11 May 2021 at 14:53, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

Section 36

Kind regards



Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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On Tue, 11 May 2021 at 12:52, [redacted] wrote:
Hi [redacted]

[redacted]

Section 36

Grateful for your thoughts.

Thanks

[redacted]



Cabinet Office

Clearing House

[redacted]

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On Tue, 11 May 2021 at 10:57, NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk> wrote:
Good morning [redacted] and team,

Please see attached the NIO response to [redacted]

I would be grateful if you could confirm if the attached is cleared for issue.

Our deadline for issue is **tomorrow**.

Section 36

[redacted]

Many thanks



Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 June 2021 14:35
To: NIO FOI
Subject: AP 21 9 Draft v3
Attachments: AP 21 9 Draft v3.DOCX

Hi FOI team,

AP 21/ 9 - [REDACTED] draft attached.

Many thanks [REDACTED] for drafting. [REDACTED] advised that we sight CO, for their records, not comment

I'm happy to send this as it is. Do you think [REDACTED] will be ok with this?

[REDACTED]

Freedom of information Team
Corporate Operations Group

[REDACTED]

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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[REDACTED]

From: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 May 2021 16:35
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FOI/21/67 - [REDACTED] - response
Attachments: FOI 21 67 - [REDACTED] - response.pdf

Dear [REDACTED]

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/67.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 17 May 2021 14:53
To: NIO FOI
Subject: AP 21/ 9 re: fOI21/67 - [REDACTED]
Attachments: FOI IR draft (1).DOCX

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, 17 May 2021 at 14:50
Subject: Fwd: Chat with [REDACTED] 'FOI IR draft (1).DOCX'
To: [REDACTED] >

Forwarded chat with [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Hi [REDACTED], try to answer the applicant's points in her complaint too

Section 36, Section 40 (2)

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
"

[REDACTED] pls can you take a look at this draft and let me know what you think

[REDACTED] *FOI IR draft (1).DOCX*

Open message

From: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 May 2021 11:04
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: AP/21/9 - [REDACTED] - Internal review acknowledgement

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email dated 14 May 2021, in relation to your request for an internal review into the way the Department handled your request for information under reference: FOI/21/67.

Your request is being handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We will endeavour to inform you of the outcome of your internal review no later than the 14/06/21.

The review of your request will consist of an analysis of the handling of your request by an independent official who was not involved in handling your original request. If the original decision is overturned, the request will be re-visited and any information, if held, released to you, entirely or in part. If the original decision is upheld, you will receive a letter from the Freedom of Information team detailing the reasons why we are unable to provide the information requested.

If on receipt of our response you are still not satisfied, you can make a further appeal to the Information Commissioner. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Further information about the role of the Information Commissioner and the appeals process can be found at www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter with us, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager

Freedom of information Team
Corporate Operations Group
Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH



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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 14 May 2021 at 12:08

Subject: Internal review of Freedom of Information request - Ministerial diaries

To: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Thank-you for your response. I would like to request an internal review.

I understand that the Northern Ireland Office considers my request to be vexatious as it would impose a grossly oppressive burden on resources.

However, I disagree with the application of section 14. According to the ICO guidance, “public authorities must keep in mind that meeting their underlying commitment to transparency and openness may involve absorbing a certain level of disruption and annoyance.” Furthermore, it states that “The authority should therefore consider any comments the applicant might have made about the purpose behind their request, and any wider value or public interest in making the requested information publicly available.”

I do not believe that the authority has taken into consideration the commitment to transparency and openness, as well as the purpose, wider value and public interest of the requested information.

I specifically mentioned that I am making this request out of the public interest. It is absolutely essential for the public to know - in full detail - the calls, events and meetings that took place across the year when the pandemic gripped the UK and beyond. It is of absolute interest to disclose the ministerial diaries in order for the public to scrutinise how ministers handled the pandemic on a day to day level. The pandemic has had a huge impact on people's lives, and it is of vital interest to see what internal and external ministerial meetings took place, as well as the telephone and Zoom calls taken by ministers.

This cannot be served by just pointing the requester to the quarterly transparency disclosures. The information disclosed in these registers are often minimal, and there have been numerous times where ministers have failed to properly disclose meetings with external organisations. As Transparency International wrote very recently: “Whilst departments started publishing details of ministers face-to-face meetings quarterly...these are often late, incomplete (e.g. Matt Hancock's private drinks with Greensill is nowhere to be found), fail to capture a whole gamut of contact (letters, emails, text messages, phone calls), and are often meaningless (knowing a minister had an ‘introduction meeting’ or met with someone to ‘discuss business’ is hardly revelatory).”

I would therefore like the Northern Ireland Office to reverse its position and disclose the information sought.

Many thanks,

-----Original Message-----


Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/67.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

Find out more on [1][GOV.UK/nio](https://www.gov.uk/nio)

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[4]Northern Ireland Office logo

[5]Signature banner: Passionate about Northern Ireland: flexible, empowering, inclusive

References

Visible links

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/northern-ireland-office>
2. <https://twitter.com/NIOgov>
3. <https://www.instagram.com/northernirelandoffice/>

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Northern
Ireland
Office

Freedom of Information Team
Northern Ireland Office
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
BT4 3SH

E: foi@nio.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/nio

Our Reference: FOI 21/67 – AP 21/9 (internal review)

14th June 2021

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) – Outcome of Internal Review

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email dated 14 May 2021 in which you requested an internal review into the way the Department handled your request for information under reference: FOI 21/67.

The purpose of an Internal Review (IR) is to assess how your FOI request was handled in the first instance and to determine whether the original decision given to you was correct.

On 13 April 2021, you asked for a copy of the Secretary of State's diaries, dated from 13 February 2020 to the date of your request being processed.

We responded on 12 May 2021 to confirm that the department would not be taking your request further as it was considered to constitute a grossly oppressive burden on the Office, were it to be complied with. This decision was supported with reference to the exemption outlined in Section 14(1) of the FOIA (2000).

Internal Review

On 14 May 2021, you appealed this decision on the grounds that the department had not taken into consideration its commitment to transparency and openness, as well as the purpose, wider value and public interest of the requested information.

An official not involved in handling your original request has reviewed your case and made the following assessment.

The initial response clearly applied an exemption to demonstrate why the department was not under any obligation to disclose the information requested. Supporting guidance was also evidenced, in the form of the Information Commissioner's Office's Section 14 guidance.

We should however like to take this opportunity to inform you that the Department has used the term 'vexatious' as this is the wording in the Freedom of Information Act. It should not, therefore, be interpreted in the strictest dictionary definition of the term. Furthermore it is the Department's position that the *request* is vexatious and not the *requester*.

The term 'vexatious' is not defined in the Freedom of Information Act. Therefore the Department is guided on the application of section 14 (1) (vexatious request) by the Information Commissioners guidance notes which sets out a number of vexatious 'indicators'. Should you wish to view the Information Commissioners section 14 (1) (vexatious request) guidance notes please use the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1198/dealing-with-vexatious-requests.pdf>

It is the Department's position that this request engages the following Information Commissioners vexatious indicators:

Burden to the Public Authority

With respect to the burden of the request it is noted that time period requested covers a significantly long period of time (a year and four months). The nature of Secretary of State's diaries means they cover a wide range of topics which would further engage a wide range of Freedom of Information exemptions. It is, therefore, the combination of the lengthy time date and, owing to the nature of the information, the level of detailed study which the Department has determined as imposing a burden of the authority which breaches the threshold of reasonableness and thus engages the exemption at section 14 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Using a diary week as sample, we made a conservative estimation that it would take half a day to identify, collate and then redact a week's worth of just the names of meeting attendees. Therefore, we estimate it would take approximately 26 days solely to protect meeting attendees privacy.

Scattergun Approach

It is the Departments position that the request appears to be fishing for information without any idea what might be revealed. No particular subject matter or topic is identified in the original request; rather the original request was for the full diary (covering almost one and a half years.) The Department does note within your request for an internal review reference to the pandemic; it is the Department's position however that these arguments are limited in light of the fact that the original request goes far beyond any interest in meetings related to Covid-19 and thus meet the threshold of 'scattergun approach' indicator set out by the Information Commissioner.

Disproportionate Effort

The Department would have to expend a disproportionate amount of resources in order to fully satisfy the request and ensure any relevant exempted information was redacted.

It is with the above Information Commissioners indicators in mind that section 14 (1) (vexatious) exemption of the Freedom of Information Act was originally applied and the original request was refused.

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:

-Focus your request by identifying topics of interest, you could review the NIO's transparency data here: [NIO transparency data on GPC and spending over £25,000 - January and February 2021](#) and publication scheme here: [Publication scheme - Northern Ireland Office](#)

-Limiting the timeframe of your request.

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. It is noted that in the Department's original response advice and assistance was not offered as to how you may wish to consider reframing this request so as to limit the burden under the section 14 (1) (vexatious) threshold. For this oversight I would like to take this opportunity to apologise.

The Internal Reviewer has considered the points raised and has concluded that the initial response was accurate and compliant with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We agree with the decision to not take your request further for the reasons given.

You have the right to appeal the decision if you think it is incorrect, details can be found below.

HOW TO APPEAL

Information Commissioner's Office

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner is an independent regulator who has the power to direct us to respond to your request differently, if he considers that we have handled it incorrectly.

You can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office,

Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter with us, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2021 12:09
To: FOI
Subject: Internal review of Freedom of Information request - Ministerial diaries

Thank-you for your response. I would like to request an internal review.

I understand that the Northern Ireland Office considers my request to be vexatious as it would impose a grossly oppressive burden on resources.

However, I disagree with the application of section 14. According to the ICO guidance, "public authorities must keep in mind that meeting their underlying commitment to transparency and openness may involve absorbing a certain level of disruption and annoyance." Furthermore, it states that "The authority should therefore consider any comments the applicant might have made about the purpose behind their request, and any wider value or public interest in making the requested information publicly available."

I do not believe that the authority has taken into consideration the commitment to transparency and openness, as well as the purpose, wider value and public interest of the requested information.

I specifically mentioned that I am making this request out of the public interest. It is absolutely essential for the public to know - in full detail - the calls, events and meetings that took place across the year when the pandemic gripped the UK and beyond. It is of absolute interest to disclose the ministerial diaries in order for the public to scrutinise how ministers handled the pandemic on a day to day level. The pandemic has had a huge impact on people's lives, and it is of vital interest to see what internal and external ministerial meetings took place, as well as the telephone and Zoom calls taken by ministers.

This cannot be served by just pointing the requester to the quarterly transparency disclosures. The information disclosed in these registers are often minimal, and there have been numerous times where ministers have failed to properly disclose meetings with external organisations. As Transparency International wrote very recently: "Whilst departments started publishing details of ministers face-to-face meetings quarterly...these are often late, incomplete (e.g. Matt Hancock's private drinks with Greensill is nowhere to be found), fail to capture a whole gamut of contact (letters, emails, text messages, phone calls), and are often meaningless (knowing a minister had an 'introduction meeting' or met with someone to 'discuss business' is hardly revelatory)."

I would therefore like the Northern Ireland Office to reverse its position and disclose the information sought.

Many thanks,



-----Original Message-----

Dear 

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/67.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

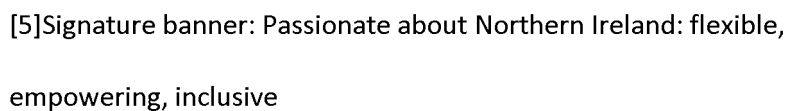
Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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References

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If you find this service useful as an FOI officer, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's FOI page.

From: NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 June 2021 16:13
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Internal Review response AP 21/9 of FOI 21/ 67 - [REDACTED]
Attachments: AP 21 9 [REDACTED] - IR response.pdf

Dear [REDACTED]

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your Internal Review request, reference AP 21/9.

Kind regards,

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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Northern Ireland Office

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On Fri, 14 May 2021 at 12:08, [REDACTED]

wrote:

Thank-you for your response. I would like to request an internal review.

I understand that the Northern Ireland Office considers my request to be vexatious as it would impose a grossly oppressive burden on resources.

However, I disagree with the application of section 14. According to the ICO guidance, “public authorities must keep in mind that meeting their underlying commitment to transparency and openness may involve absorbing a certain level of disruption and annoyance.” Furthermore, it states that “The authority should therefore consider any comments the applicant might have made about the purpose behind their request, and any wider value or public interest in making the requested information publicly available.”

I do not believe that the authority has taken into consideration the commitment to transparency and openness, as well as the purpose, wider value and public interest of the requested information.

I specifically mentioned that I am making this request out of the public interest. It is absolutely essential for the public to know - in full detail - the calls, events and meetings that took place across the year when the pandemic gripped the UK and beyond. It is of absolute interest to disclose the ministerial diaries in order for the public to scrutinise how ministers handled the pandemic on a day to day level. The pandemic has had a huge impact on people’s lives, and it is of vital interest to see what internal and external ministerial meetings took place, as well as the telephone and Zoom calls taken by ministers.

This cannot be served by just pointing the requester to the quarterly transparency disclosures. The information disclosed in these registers are often minimal, and there have been numerous times where

ministers have failed to properly disclose meetings with external organisations. As Transparency International wrote very recently: “Whilst departments started publishing details of ministers face-to-face meetings quarterly...these are often late, incomplete (e.g. Matt Hancock’s private drinks with Greensill is nowhere to be found), fail to capture a whole gamut of contact (letters, emails, text messages, phone calls), and are often meaningless (knowing a minister had an ‘introduction meeting’ or met with someone to ‘discuss business’ is hardly revelatory).”

I would therefore like the Northern Ireland Office to reverse its position and disclose the information sought.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

Dear [REDACTED]

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/67.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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References

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From: [REDACTED] on behalf of NIO FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 May 2021 14:37
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: NIO FOI
Subject: Internal review AP 21/9 - of FOI 21/67 - [REDACTED] - Ministerial diaries
Attachments: FOI_21_67 - [REDACTED] - response.eml (281 KB); IR reply template.DOCX; IR Check list and considerations.docx

Hi [REDACTED]

Please see below an Internal Review request AP 21/ 9 regarding FOI/21/67.

Could you please allocate this to a member of your team not involved in the previous FOI response/ decision. Under the FOI Act we are required to review the FOI response to ensure it was correct before the applicant can make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office. It's our chance to put anything right, IF there is anything to put right.

Section 36

Please provide a draft to the FOI inbox before the 20 day deadline 14th June 2021.

For guidance I've attached:

1. the original decision
2. Internal Review template - tailor it to your needs.
3. IR check list and lines

feel free to call/ hangout/ email if you need further information,

Many thanks in advance and kind regards,

Freedom of information Team
Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Find out more on [GOV.UK/nio](https://gov.uk/nio)

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 14 May 2021 at 12:08

Subject: Internal review of Freedom of Information request - Ministerial diaries

To: FOI <foi@nio.gov.uk>

Thank-you for your response. I would like to request an internal review.

I understand that the Northern Ireland Office considers my request to be vexatious as it would impose a grossly oppressive burden on resources.

However, I disagree with the application of section 14. According to the ICO guidance, “public authorities must keep in mind that meeting their underlying commitment to transparency and openness may involve absorbing a certain level of disruption and annoyance.” Furthermore, it states that “The authority should therefore consider any comments the applicant might have made about the purpose behind their request, and any wider value or public interest in making the requested information publicly available.”

I do not believe that the authority has taken into consideration the commitment to transparency and openness, as well as the purpose, wider value and public interest of the requested information.

I specifically mentioned that I am making this request out of the public interest. It is absolutely essential for the public to know - in full detail - the calls, events and meetings that took place across the year when the pandemic gripped the UK and beyond. It is of absolute interest to disclose the ministerial diaries in order for the public to scrutinise how ministers handled the pandemic on a day to day level. The pandemic has had a huge impact on people's lives, and it is of vital interest to see what internal and external ministerial meetings took place, as well as the telephone and Zoom calls taken by ministers.

This cannot be served by just pointing the requester to the quarterly transparency disclosures. The information disclosed in these registers are often minimal, and there have been numerous times where ministers have failed to properly disclose meetings with external organisations. As Transparency International wrote very recently: “Whilst departments started publishing details of ministers face-to-face meetings quarterly...these are often late, incomplete (e.g. Matt Hancock's private drinks with Greensill is nowhere to be found), fail to capture a whole gamut of contact (letters, emails, text messages, phone calls), and are often meaningless (knowing a minister had an ‘introduction meeting’ or met with someone to ‘discuss business’ is hardly revelatory).”

I would therefore like the Northern Ireland Office to reverse its position and disclose the information sought.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

Dear [REDACTED]

Please see the attached letter of response in respect of your FOI request to the Northern Ireland Office, reference FOI/21/67.

Many Thanks

Freedom of Information Team

Corporate Operations Group

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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References

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[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]
18 May 2021 12:07

To:

foi@nio.gov.uk

Subject:

Out of office Re: AP 21/ 9 re: fOI21/67 - [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email.

I will have limited access to this email account today. For anything urgent, please reach me on [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Otherwise, I will respond as soon as possible.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Find out more on [GOV.UK/nio](https://www.gov.uk/nio)



Northern
Ireland
Office

Freedom of Information Team
Northern Ireland Office
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
BT4 3SH

T: [REDACTED]
E: foi@nio.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/nio

Name address

Our Reference: XXX

DateXX2021

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) – Outcome of Internal Review

Dear XXXX,

Thank you for your email dated XXXX in which you requested an internal review into the way the Department handled your request for information under reference: FOI 21/ XXX.

The purpose of an IR is to assess how your FOI request was handled in the first instance and to determine whether the original decision given to you was correct.

On [insert date], you asked:

[Insert request here]

We responded on [insert date]:

[Insert response to FOI request]

Public interest considerations in favour of disclosure:

[Insert arguments in favour]

Public interest considerations against disclosure:

[insert arguments against]

Internal Review

On [insert date] you appealed on the following grounds:

[insert complaint/ IR request]

An official not involved in handling your original request has reviewed your case and made the following assessment:

Insert your paragraph here

The Internal Reviewer has considered the points raised, and has concluded that the initial response was not/ accurate and compliant with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). I dis/agree with the decision to [INSERT HERE]

You have the right to appeal the decision if you think it is incorrect, details can be found below.

HOW TO APPEAL

Information Commissioner's Office

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner is an independent regulator who has the power to direct us to respond to your request differently, if he considers that we have handled it incorrectly.

You can contact the Information Commissioner's Office at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter with us, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager



Northern
Ireland
Office

Northern Ireland Office
Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH

foi@nio.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/nio
[@niopressoffice](https://twitter.com/niopressoffice)

Section 40
Ref: FOI/21/56

Dear Section 40,

5 May 2021

Thank you for your request dated 2nd April 2021 in which you requested that the Northern Ireland Office provide the following under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA"):

How much has the NIO spent on photographic services from companies such as Press Eye, in each of the last 5 years.

In response to your query I can confirm that the Northern Ireland Office spent the following amounts on photographic services:

Year	Expenditure
2016-17	£19,964.41
2017-18	£4,548
2018-19	£26,873.60
2019-20	£23,006.05
2020-21	£12,740.50

You have the right to appeal our decision if you think it is incorrect. If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow

Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter or our handling of your request, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Manager



Northern
Ireland
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Northern Ireland Office
Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH

foi@nio.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/nio
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Ref: FOI/21/57

Dear [REDACTED]

5 May 2021

Thank you for your request dated 2nd April 2021 in which you requested that the Northern Ireland Office provide the following under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA"):

How many press/new/comms/media/information officers have you had in each of the last five years, including admin staff supporting such functions? Please supply the requested information by grade.

In response to your query I can confirm that the Northern Ireland Office holds the information. The number of communication officers broken down by grade / band and financial year is included in the table below.

Year	SCS2	SCS1	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Total
2016 / 17	0	0	0	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	0	[REDACTED]
2017 / 18	0	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	0	7
2018 / 19	0	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	8
2019 / 20	0	0	[REDACTED]	0	[REDACTED]	0	[REDACTED]	8
2020 / 21	[REDACTED]	0	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	0	[REDACTED]	10

You have the right to appeal our decision if you think it is incorrect. If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House

Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter or our handling of your request, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Manager



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Northern Ireland Office
Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH

T [REDACTED]
E foi@nio.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/nio
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5 May 2021

Dear Section 40 [REDACTED],

REFERENCE: FOI/21/62 - Cyber Security Training

Thank you for your email of 8th April 2021 in which you requested the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

Under the Freedom of Information Act, please could I request the following information:

- 1. Breakdown of all employees within your organisation who have undertaken cybercrime/cyber security training over the last two financial years (FY 19-20 and FY 20-21)**
- 2. Detail on the nature of the course e.g. "e-skills online cyber risk training"**
- 3. Detail on the amount spent on each course**

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

In response to your first question I have considered your request and I can confirm that the department holds information that you have asked for, but in this case we will not be providing it to you as it is exempt from disclosure.

In response to your question we are not obliged, under section 40(2) of the Act, to provide information that is the personal information of another person if releasing it would contravene any of the Data Protection Principles under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). In this

instance we believe that the release of this information would contravene the first data protection principle and therefore section 40(2) is engaged. The terms of this exemption in the Freedom of Information Act mean that we do not have to consider whether or not it would be in the public interest for you to have the information.

In relation to question two please see the table below for the details of courses:

Financial year	Name of course
2019/20	BCS Certificate in Information Security Management Principles (CISMP)
2019/20	SANS Introduction to Cyber Security
2019/20	Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
2020/21	Cyber Resilience RESILIA Foundation
2020/21	Responsible for Information

In regards to question three there was no cost to the department as the funding was supplied by another Government Department.

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

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The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter or our handling of your request, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager



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Northern Ireland Office
Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH

foi@nio.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/nio
[@niopressoffice](https://twitter.com/niopressoffice)

Ref: FOI/21/55

Dear **Section 40**,

4 May 2021

Thank you for your request dated 1st April 2021 in which you requested that the Northern Ireland Office provide the following under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA"):

Which daily, weekly and monthly newspapers and magazines does the NIO purchase?

How much did you spend on each publication per annum in the latest full year for which information is held?

In response to your query I can confirm that during FY 2020/21 the Northern Ireland Office spent £405 on newspapers and magazines. We do not hold spend information by publication but the titles include: Belfast Telegraph; Irish News; Newsletter.

You have the right to appeal our decision if you think it is incorrect. If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

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SK9 5AF

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If you wish to discuss this letter or our handling of your request, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Manager

24 May 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

REFERENCE: FOI/21/69

Thank you for your email dated 15 April in which you requested a copy of the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

1. Please disclose how many senior civil servants (SCS grade) in your department were employed by another company/body whilst in the employment of the civil service in each of the following years:

- a. 2015
- b. 2016
- c. 2017
- d. 2018
- e. 2019
- f. 2020
- g. 2021 to date

2. Please disclose in how many of the cases identified in the response to Q1a-g was the secondary employer Greensill Capital.

3. In each case identified in the response to Q1a-g, please provide the rank of the senior civil servant (Deputy Director, Director General etc) and the name of the company/body by whom they were also employed.

4. Please disclose how many violations of civil service conflict of interest regulations in relation to such employments' (either Civil Service Code violations or breaches of departmental rules on conflict of interest) by senior civil servants (SCS grade) in your department were recorded in each of the years:



- a. 2015
- b. 2016
- c. 2017
- d. 2018
- e. 2019
- f. 2020
- g. 2021 to date

5. Please disclose the register of conflicts of interest in your department for senior civil servants (SCS grade) as of 1st January in the following years:

- a. 2015
- b. 2016
- c. 2017
- d. 2018
- e. 2019
- f. 2020
- g. 2021

I can confirm that the Northern Ireland Office holds the information that you have asked for.

For question 1, we have interpreted employment by another company/body to mean any outside activity that is remunerated. There were no declarations of other employment from officials in the SCS grades for the period 2015-2021.

For question 2, there were no cases identified.

For question 3, there were no cases identified.

For question 4, there were no violations recorded.

For question 5, the Northern Ireland Office holds a register of interests for its board members, made available on request. For non-board members at SCS grade, the information you have requested is being withheld because it is exempt under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 40(2) exempts personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would, amongst other things, contravene one of the data protection principles set out in Article 5 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In this case, I believe



disclosure would contravene data protection principle (a), which provides that personal data must be processed fairly and lawfully. Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and the Northern Ireland Office is not obliged to consider whether the public interest favours disclosing the information.

For board members at SCS grade, the register of interests is as follows:

Northern Ireland Office Register of Interests

2015/16

Name	Role	Body	Position Held
Colin Perry	Director	Dasic Marine Ltd	Non Executive Director

2016/17

Name	Role	Body	Position Held
Colin Perry	Director	Dasic Marine Ltd	Non Executive

2017/18

Name	Role	Body	Position Held
Colin Perry	Director	Dasic Marine Ltd	Non Executive

2018/19

No SCS interests declared at board level.



2019/20

Name	Role	Body	Position Held
Madeleine Alessandri	PUS	Civil Service Retirement Fellowship	Chair

2020/21

Name	Role	Body	Position Held
Madeleine Alessandri	PUS	Civil Service Retirement Fellowship	Chair

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons. If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

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Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Team



Section 40

Section 40

21 May 2021

REFERENCE: FOI/21/73

Thank you for your email dated 22 April 2021 in which you requested the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

A list of the vehicles operated by the department or its executive agencies or related non-departmental public bodies that share FOI resources, including:

1. make and model (inc. year) OR if not available, the vehicle type (i.e. van, car etc.)
2. engine and fuel type
3. emissions class (i.e. whether it is ultra-low emissions) and the emissions in g/km of CO₂, if possible
4. purchase date
5. The agency/unit/NDPB which operates the vehicle

Please include as much of this information as is readily available.

If it is not possible to compile a full list, for whatever reason, I would consider a breakdown of all the vehicles by points (2) and (3) to fulfil the request, subject to the condition below.

Please only include results for non-specialist vehicles that fall within the scope of the Government Fleet Commitment or note whether a vehicle falls within the scope. This is sometimes defined as cars or 'M1' vehicles, a United Nations vehicle standard. This may be the category used for vehicle type in point (1) in which case you can consider this part of the request satisfied.



Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Please see below details of NIO car as requested

1. make and model (inc. year) OR if not available, the vehicle type (i.e. van, car etc.) - **Ford Mondeo (2018)**
2. engine and fuel type - **2.0 Diesel**
3. emissions class (i.e. ultra-low emissions) - **Euro emissions standard 6. 130 g/km**
4. purchase date - **Not purchased - Leased. Commencing 16/08/18.**
5. The agency of unit which operates the vehicle - **Northern Ireland Office**

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager





Northern
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Section 40

By email: Section 40

Northern Ireland Office
Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH

foi@nio.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/nio
@NIOgov

21 May 2021

Dear Section 40

REFERENCE: FOI 21/74

Thank you for your email dated 22 April 2021 in which you requested the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

1. *What is the remit of the Constitution and Rights Policy Group ?*
2. *What were the Terms of Reference for its establishment ?*
3. *By what criteria were individuals selected to sit on this Group ?*
4. *Who are the members of the Group ?*
5. *How often does it meet ?*
6. *Where are its minutes published ?*

In regards to Question 1, I can confirm that the Northern Ireland Office holds the information that you have asked for. The Constitution and Rights Policy Group is a team in the Northern Ireland Office. The Constitution and Rights Policy Group contributes to the Northern Ireland Office's priority outcomes of:

- Society – Supporting greater inclusion, tolerance, and openness in Northern Ireland
- Governance – Ensuring that governance in Northern Ireland is responsive, transparent, and able to deliver effective public services

In regards to Questions 2-6, we have interpreted your request to mean that the Constitution and Rights Policy Group is a committee that meets regularly. As the Constitution and Rights Policy Group is a team with permanent staff, it does not have a membership or selection criteria, terms of reference, members, a schedule of meetings, or minutes. The Northern Ireland Office therefore does not hold the information that you have asked for in Questions 2-6.

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter.

If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons. If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

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Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team



Northern
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BT4 3SH

Section 40

Section 40

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[@nioinfooffice](https://twitter.com/nioinfooffice)

24 May 2021

Dear Section 40,

REFERENCE: FOI – 21/75

Thank you for your email of 23 April 2021 in which you requested the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

Please could you provide me with information regarding the introduction of any wellbeing days or mental health days for the employees in your department? By wellbeing days, I mean days off given to employees to help them prioritise wellness or mental health. Some companies have introduced these days in response to the stress of the pandemic.

I would like to know:

- a. Have you introduced a wellbeing day for your employees?**
- b. If so, does this apply to all your employees or just some?**
- c. When was it introduced?**



- d. Can the wellbeing day be taken off by employees at anytime of the year, or is there a specific date when everyone takes a day off together?**
- e. Why did you introduce a wellbeing day?**

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

The NIO takes staff welfare extremely seriously and recognising staff wellbeing is an ongoing priority within the department, especially during the covid pandemic.

The NIO has not introduced a wellbeing day off. However, we have provided our people with a range of advice, guidance and sessions on wellbeing.

Wellbeing tips are also available to staff through our Staff Wellbeing Guide, through which they can be signposted to other external sources of support.

NIO staff also have access to confidential support through the Employee Assistance Programme, as well as support from the Mental Health First Aiders.

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF



The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter or our handling of your request, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager





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Stormont Estate
Belfast BT5 4SH

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E foi@nio.gov.uk

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[@niopressoffice](https://twitter.com/nioPRESSoffice)

REFERENCE: FOI/21/76

25 May 2021

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for your email dated 26th April 2021 in which you made a request for the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

"I write to ask under Fol entitlement questions about Brandon Lewis discharging his duties as SoS for NI since he was appointed

- (1) How many complete days has he spent in NI?*
- (2) How many visits of less than one complete day has he made?*
- (3) How many overnights has he spent in NI as SoS?"*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We have conducted a search of our records and can confirm the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland spent (i) 39 complete days in Northern Ireland; (ii) 17 trips of less than 1 complete day; and (iii) 26 overnights in Northern Ireland during the period. Ministerial travel during this period was impacted by covid restrictions and conducted in line with government guidance.

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.



If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

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If you wish to discuss this please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager





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T [REDACTED]
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[@niopressoffice](https://twitter.com/niopressoffice)

REFERENCE: FOI/21/77

25 May 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email dated 26th April 2021 in which you made a request for the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

I would like to know how many times Brandon Lewis visited his constituency of Great Yarmouth between February 13, 2020, and the end of that month according to his ministerial diary.

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We are withholding this information under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of information Act. The information you request is of a personal nature relating to the Secretary of State's visits to his constituency, where he also lives. Section 40(2) exempts personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would, amongst other things, contravene one of the data protection principles set out in Article 5 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In this case, I believe disclosure would contravene data protection principle (a), which provides that personal data must be processed fairly and lawfully. Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and the Northern Ireland Office is not obliged to consider whether the public interest favours disclosing the information.

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.



If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

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If you wish to discuss this please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager



[redacted]
Section 40

[redacted]
Section 40

28 May 2021

REFERENCE: FOI/21/79

Dear [redacted] Section 40,

Thank you for your email dated 1 May 2021 in which you requested a copy of the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

1. **How many officially issued mobile phones have been reported lost or stolen in the NIO for each of the last five years?**

Please see table below.

2. **What is the value of the loss?**

Please see table below. We have taken this to mean the replacement value rather than the actual values at time of theft/loss.

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Year	Number of officially issued mobile phones lost or stolen	Replacement value
2020	5	£1,764.15
2019	0	0
2018	1	£352.83
2017	0	0
2016	0	0



If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
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Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter or our handling of your request, please contact the Freedom of Information Team via foi@noi.gov.uk. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the work of the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager





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Dear [REDACTED]

28 June 2021

REFERENCE: FOI/21/89

Thank you for your email dated 28 May 2021 in which you requested the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

I would like to submit a Freedom of Information request please in relation to WhatsApp messages.

- 1. Can you please tell me how many WhatsApp messages that Special Advisors working in your department sent as part of their work as civil servants on the 26th May, 2021.***
- 2. Can you also provide me with copies of those messages on WhatsApp sent on that day by your Special Advisors that were specifically discussing Mr Dominic Cummings.***

If the cost limit of FOI exceeds No 2. Can you please just send me details of No. 1

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

RESPONSE

We are writing to advise you that the Northern Ireland Office is unable to confirm or deny whether the information you have requested in your request 1 is held under section 31(3) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act').

We consider that confirming or denying that such information is held would be likely to prejudice (a) the prevention or detection of crime, (b) the apprehension or prosecution of offenders and (c) the administration of justice. A confirmation or denial that Northern Ireland

Office officials used WhatsApp would provide information as to which messaging service those officials used.

It would either confirm that those officials use WhatsApp (which is neither confirmed nor denied) or it would deny that those officials use it, which leaves open the possibility that it uses other messaging services. It would then be open to other requests for information as to whether Northern Ireland Office officials use those other messaging services.

We can confirm that special advisers receive appropriate advice on the security of their Communications.

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

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If you wish to discuss this please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager

Orange Lodge

Dear [REDACTED],

Following last week's agreement, the Minister of State for Northern Ireland, Robin Walker MP would like to hold a call with you to discuss the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Would you be free tomorrow for a call at 2pm?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Would welcome a conversation, unfortunately I have meetings arranged tomorrow between 12 noon and 4 pm. Could do the morning or 4 pm.

[REDACTED]

Thanks [REDACTED],

Would 11am tomorrow morning work ok?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

11 am fine – Zoom or just audio.

Thanks [REDACTED]

Zoom would be preferable, please see the details below:

Join Zoom Meeting

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Great will click in at 11 am

Thanks

Royal Black Preceptory

Dear [REDACTED],

Following last week's agreement, the Minister of State for Northern Ireland, Robin Walker MP would like to hold a call with you to discuss the Northern Ireland Protocol and the views of the Royal Black Preceptory.

Would you be free tomorrow for a call at 2:30pm?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] - Thank you for your email. I am available at 2.30 pm tomorrow afternoon and will keep this time free. Regards. [REDACTED]

Thanks [REDACTED],

Please see the Zoom details for the meeting below:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

If you've any issues please let me know.

[REDACTED]

Apprentice Boys of Derry

Dear [REDACTED]

Following last week's agreement, the Minister of State for Northern Ireland, Robin Walker MP would like to hold a call with you to discuss the Northern Ireland Protocol and the views of the Apprentice Boys of Derry.

Would you be free tomorrow for a call at 3pm?

[REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED],

Members of the Apprentice Boys Association will be pleased to participate in a conversation with Minister Walker tomorrow (Tuesday) at 3.00pm. I presume the conversation will take place via Zoom, similar to our last meeting with the Minister.

Those participating are as follows;

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I trust you will facilitate the discussion by forwarding the link to the above representatives.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED],

Thanks for your email. Appreciate the advice on who will be attending. Please see the Zoom details for the meeting below:

Join Zoom Meeting

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

If you've any issues please let me know.



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Stormont Estate
Belfast BT5 4SH

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[@niopressoffice](https://twitter.com/niopressoffice)

[redacted]
[redacted]

Dear [redacted],

5 July 2021

REFERENCE: FOI/21/90

Thank you for your email dated 29 May 2021 in which you requested a copy of the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

"In December 2020, Brandon Lewis had a meeting with newspaper journalists to discuss the end of the Transition Period, according to transparency data.

I would like to request the following information in relation to this meeting:

- 1. Details of where the meeting between the minister and newspaper journalists to discuss the end of the Transition Period took place, who was in attendance, and how it lasted.*
- 2. All documents created in connection the meeting with newspaper journalists to discuss the end of the Transition Period. This could include, but not be limited to, any minutes or notes taken at the minutes or afterwards, or any presentations prepared as part of the meeting.*
- 3. Email correspondence related to this meeting sent by or received by the Department/the minister in advance of, and after the meeting."*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

In relation to question 1, this meeting took place virtually with reporters present and lasted approximately 10 minutes.

It is the Department's position that information relating to who was in attendance constitutes individuals personal data. Therefore this information is being withheld by way of Section 40(2) (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 40 provides an exemption from the right to information if it is personal data as defined in the DPA. These state that you should not disclose information under FOIA or the EIR if:

- it is the personal data of the requestor; or
- it is the personal data of someone else;



Additionally personal data should not be disclosed if it would contravene the data protection principles, if disclosure would contravene an objection to processing, or if the data is exempt from the right of subject access.

Section 40(2) exempts personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would, amongst other things, contravene one of the data protection principles set out in Article 5 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In this case, I believe disclosure would contravene data protection principle (a), which provides that personal data must be processed fairly and lawfully. Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and the Northern Ireland Office is not obliged to consider whether the public interest favours disclosing the information.

In relation to questions 2 and 3, we hold information within scope of your request, however this is exempt under section 35(1)(a) and (b) (formulation of government policy) and section 40(2) (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act,

Section 35 (formulation of government policy)

Section 35 (formulation of government policy) is a qualified exemption, which means that the decision to disclose the requested material is subject to the public interest test. When assessing whether or not it was in the public interest to disclose the information to you, we took into account the following factors:

Public interest considerations favouring disclosure

- The public having a greater understanding of Government policy
- Greater transparency of Government policy.

Public interest considerations favouring withholding

These public interests have been weighed against a strong public interest that policy-making and its implementation are of the highest quality and informed by a full consideration of all the options.

- Ministers must be able to discuss policy freely and frankly, exchange views on available options and understand their possible implications.
- The candour of all involved would be affected by their assessment of whether the content of the discussions will be disclosed prematurely.
- If discussions were routinely made public there is a risk that Ministers may feel inhibited from being frank and candid with one another.
- As a result the quality of debate underlying collective decision making would decline, leading to worse informed and poorer decision making. This could potentially damage the Government's policy-making process, which remains ongoing.

Taking into account all the circumstances of this case, we reached the view that, on balance, the public interest favours withholding this information at this time.

Yours sincerely,



Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Find out more on GOV.UK/nio

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Northern Ireland Office

Passionate about Northern Ireland: flexible, empowering, inclusive

Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with this response the first step, as set out in the Freedom of Information Act, is to seek an internal review. Requests for internal reviews should be submitted in writing to the:

Northern Ireland Office
Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH
FOI@NIO.gov.uk

Please note that after 3 months from the last meaningful correspondence this case will be closed. For an internal review request please contact us within this 3 month period, otherwise any request received after this time will be treated as a new enquiry.

If, upon the completion of any internal view, you are still dissatisfied you may seek an independent review from the Information Commissioner. Requests for reviews by the Information Commissioner should be made in writing to:

The Information Commissioner,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
SK9 5AF.

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.





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Belfast
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Section 40

Section 40

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@niopressoffice

25 June 2021

Dear Section 40

REFERENCE: FOI 21/ 94

Thank you for your email dated 6th June in which you made a request to know:

1. What payments, if any, the Northern Ireland Office made to Stonewall (officially Stonewall Equality Limited) in the financial year 2019/20.
2. What payments, if any, the Northern Ireland Office made to Stonewall (officially Stonewall Equality Limited) in the financial year 2020/21.
3. What payments, if any, the Northern Ireland Office expect to make to Stonewall (officially Stonewall Equality Limited) in the current financial year.





Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and I can confirm that the following payments have been made to Stonewall Equality Limited:

2019/20: £0.00

2020/21: £3,000.00

2021/22: £3,000.00

These payments are for NIO's participation in the Diversity Champions programme run by Stonewall. Participation in the scheme gives the NIO access to training, resources and advice on good practice on inclusivity. The programme also gives us access to the annual Workplace Equality Index run by Stonewall.

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

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Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter or our handling of your request, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Manager





**Northern
Ireland
Office**

Northern Ireland Office
Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH

foi@nio.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/nio
[@niopressoffice](#)

Via Email

Date: 05 July 2021

Ref: FOI/21/102

Dear [REDACTED] 0

Thank you for your request dated 11 June 2021 in which you requested that the Northern Ireland Office provide the following under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA"):

- 1. What is the department's total spend on social media marketing between January 2021 and May 2021?**
- 2. What is the breakdown of this spend per channel?**
 - i) LinkedIn,
 - ii) Facebook,
 - iii) Twitter,
 - iv) Instagram,
 - v) YouTube,
 - vi) TikTok,
 - vii) Snapchat
- 3. What is the department's total spend on influencer marketing between January 2021 and May 2021?**
- 4. What is the department's policy on employee social media use, if any?**

Your request has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (2000). I can confirm that we hold some information relevant to your request. If I may, I shall address each of your points in turn:

- 1. What is the department's total spend on social media marketing between January 2021 and May 2021?**

The total spend by the Department on social media marketing between January 2021 and May 2021 was £4,430. For further information with respect to the Department's recent social media spend please see the following Parliamentary Question: [PQ response](#) (UIN 8785).

- 2. What is the breakdown of this spend per channel?**

This figure (£4,420) was divided between Facebook and Instagram. No further expenditure was allocated to the other channels mentioned in the question.

- 3. What is the department's total spend on influencer marketing between January 2021 and May 2021?**

The Department has not spent any public funds on influencer marketing between January 2021 and May 2021.

4. What is the department's policy on employee social media use, if any?

Departmental employees are bound by the Civil Service Code of Conduct, which is publicly available at the links below. Civil servants must adhere to the Civil Service Code online as well as offline. Social media is a public forum and the same considerations apply as would to speaking in public or writing something for publication, either officially or in a personal capacity outside of work. Further details on propriety in digital and social media can be found in the link below.

Propriety in digital and social media
Civil Service Code of Conduct
Government Communications Service guidance

I trust this information is of some use to you and I wish you all the best with your research.

Complaints

You have the right to appeal our decision if you think it is incorrect. If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons.

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

If you wish to discuss this letter or our handling of your request, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Manager

[redacted]
Section 40

Dear [redacted],

5 July 2021

REFERENCE: FOI/21/91

Thank you for your email dated 29 May 2021 in which you requested a copy of the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

"In December 2020, minister Robin Walker had meetings with the Orange Order, the Royal Black Institute and the Apprentice Boys of Derry, respectively, according to transparency data.

I would like to request the following information in relation to these meetings:

- 1. Details of where each of these meetings took place, who was in attendance, and how it lasted.***
- 2. All documents created in connection with each of these meetings. This could include, but not be limited to, any minutes or notes taken at the minutes or afterwards, or any presentations prepared as part of the meeting.***
- 3. Email correspondence related to these meetings sent by or received by the Department/the minister in advance of, and after the meeting."***

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

1. Details of where each of these meetings took place, who was in attendance, and how it lasted.

In answer to your first question, the meetings all took place on the 15th December via video and lasted for approximately 30 minutes.

Personal information has been redacted from the document under Section 40(2) (personal data) of the FOIA. Section 40 provides an exemption from the right to information if it is



personal data as defined in the DPA. These state that you should not disclose information under FOIA or the EIR if:

- it is the personal data of the requestor; or
- it is the personal data of someone else;

Additionally personal data should not be disclosed if it would contravene the data protection principles, if disclosure would contravene an objection to processing, or if the data is exempt from the right of subject access

2. All documents created in connection with each of these meetings. This could include, but not be limited to, any minutes or notes taken at the minutes or afterwards, or any presentations prepared as part of the meeting.

3. Email correspondence related to these meetings sent by or received by the Department/the minister in advance of, and after the meeting.

We do hold some further information in relation to your request. However, the information you have requested is exempt under section 35(1)(a) and (b) of the Freedom of Information Act, which protects the formulation of policy and communications between Ministers. Disclosure would weaken Ministers' ability to discuss controversial and sensitive topics free from premature public scrutiny.

Section 35(1)(a) is a qualified exemption, which means that the decision to disclose the requested material is subject to the public interest test. When assessing whether or not it was in the public interest to disclose the information to you, we took into account the following factors:

Public interest considerations favouring disclosure

- The public having a greater understanding of Government policy
- Greater transparency of Government policy.

In order to facilitate this release, as can be seen, it has been necessary to redact personal data by way of section 40 (2) (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act. Please see below further explanation with respect to the application of Section 40 (2) (personal data).

Additional to the attached document being released to you the Department also holds further information in relation to your request. This additional information, it is the Department's position, is however, exempt under section 35(1)(a) and (b) (formulation of government policy) and section 40(2)(personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act,.

Section 35 (formulation of government policy)

Section 35 (formulation of government policy) is a qualified exemption, which means that the decision to disclose the requested material is subject to the public interest test. When assessing whether or not it was in the public interest to disclose the information to you, we took into account the following factors:



Public interest considerations favouring disclosure

- The public having a greater understanding of Government policy
- Greater transparency of Government policy.

Public interest considerations favouring withholding

These public interests have been weighed against a strong public interest that policy-making and its implementation are of the highest quality and informed by a full consideration of all the options.

-Ministers must be able to discuss policy freely and frankly, exchange views on available options and understand their possible implications.

-The candour of all involved would be affected by their assessment of whether the content of the discussions will be disclosed prematurely.

-If discussions were routinely made public there is a risk that Ministers may feel inhibited from being frank and candid with one another.

-As a result the quality of debate underlying collective decision making would decline, leading to worse informed and poorer decision making. This could potentially damage the Government's policy-making process, which remains ongoing.

Taking into account all the circumstances of this case, we reached the view that, on balance, the public interest favours withholding this information at this time.

Section 40 (personal data)

Information you have requested is also being withheld because it is exempt under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 40(2) exempts personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would, amongst other things, contravene one of the data protection principles set out in Article 5 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In this case, I believe disclosure would contravene data protection principle (a), which provides that personal data must be processed fairly and lawfully. Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and the Northern Ireland Office is not obliged to consider whether the public interest favours disclosing the information.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of information Team

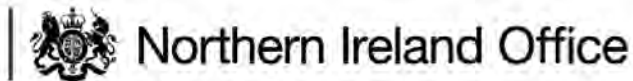
Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ



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Complaints

If you are dissatisfied with this response the first step, as set out in the Freedom of Information Act, is to seek an internal review. Requests for internal reviews should be submitted in writing to the:

Northern Ireland Office
Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH
FOI@NIO.gov.uk

Please note that after 3 months from the last meaningful correspondence this case will be closed. For an internal review request please contact us within this 3 month period, otherwise any request received after this time will be treated as a new enquiry.

If, upon the completion of any internal view, you are still dissatisfied you may seek an independent review from the Information Commissioner. Requests for reviews by the Information Commissioner should be made in writing to:

The Information Commissioner,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
SK9 5AF.

The Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. Further details on the role of the Information Commissioner and the handling of appeals can be found at: www.ico.org.uk

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Stormont House
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Belfast
BT4 3SH

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www.gov.uk/nio

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28 July 2021

Section 40

Section 40

Dear **Section 40**

REFERENCE: FOI/21/114

Thank you for your request received by the Northern Ireland Office on the 28 June 2021. For reference your original request was as follows:

I would like to submit a request under the freedom of information act about equalities issues at the department.

1. Would it be possible to send me any correspondence from the senior management team (ie the people pictured on the departmental gov.uk homepage) that includes the words "black lives matter" or "white privilege" and that was sent between 25 May 2020 and 28 June 2021?

2. Would it also be possible to send me any emails sent from senior management to all staff (ie general mailouts) about Black Lives Matter or other equalities issues from the same time period.

Your request was considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

I can confirm that information within scope of your original request is held by the Department.

We conducted a search of the "senior management team" (as indicated on our website). For element one of your request it has been determined that the Department holds no relevant in scope information; that is to say no correspondence that included the words "black lives

matter” or “white privilege” between 25 May 2020 and 28 June 2021 sent from the Department’s senior management team to all staff.

With request to element two, “any emails sent from senior management to all staff about Black Lives Matter or other equalities issues”, relevant in scope information has been located (please see Annex A below). As can be seen in order to facilitate this information release personal data has been redacted by way of section 40(2) (personal data) of the Freedom of Information Act.

The information requested consists of personal information. 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, in 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](#).

I trust this information is at least of some use and I wish you all the best with your research.

Yours sincerely

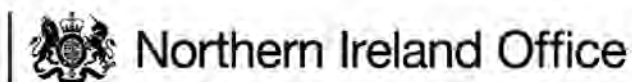
Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

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Annex A – Information being released (with section 40(2) (personal data) redacted)

11 May 2021

Colleagues,

Inclusivity matters. It is one of our core values as a department and we continue to strive for a culture which enables everyone to bring their whole self to work, to thrive and be supported. Over the next year, I want us to be more proactive in our approach to inclusivity, more ambitious in the

standards we hold ourselves to and more mindful of the experiences of colleagues from different backgrounds, traditions, and personal situations.

To kick off a series of conversations on all areas of inclusivity, one year on from the brutal murder of George Floyd and the protests and discussions that followed, I would like to invite you to a further discussion on the experiences of BAME colleagues in the NIO.

Over the past year we have taken a number of steps aimed at making the department more reflective of the community we serve. This means, in addition to attracting staff from a range of backgrounds, ensuring that everyone feels valued and supported in their roles and that the NIO is somewhere everyone can realise their potential. Central to this is improving our understanding of the experiences of BAME colleagues in the NIO, the civil service and in wider society. This is not just a matter for HR or our Diversity and Inclusion Group. It is a matter for all of us.

██████████ will be sending out meeting invites shortly - please keep an eye out in your inbox and join us if you can.

██████████

Complaints

If you believe this reply is not in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. If you request a review you should do so in writing stating the reasons to the following:

Northern Ireland Office
Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH
FOI@NIO.gov.uk

If following an internal review you were to remain dissatisfied you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner and ask him to investigate whether the NIO has complied with the terms of the FOIA. You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

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Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

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If you wish to discuss this please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

 Northern Ireland Office	
	Northern Ireland Office Freedom of Information Team Stormont House Stormont Estate Belfast BT4 3SH
	T E  foi@nio.gov.uk www.gov.uk/nio @niopressoffice
26 July 2021	

Dear  on 40

REFERENCE: FOI/21/117 Secondments

Thank you for your email of 28th June 2021 in which you requested the following information from the Northern Ireland Office:

- 1. Since 1st January 2019 to the current day, please indicate the number of secondees that have been received by this department. Please also provide a list of the organisations where the secondees came from.*
- 2. Since 1st January 2019 to the current day, please indicate the number of civil servants from this department that have been seconded to external organisations. Please also provide a list of the organisations that received these secondees.*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). I can confirm that the Department holds information relevant to your request.

In response to question one I can confirm from the 1st January 2019 to the current day the Northern Ireland Office has received 16 secondees into the department. These individuals were seconded from the Northern Ireland Civil Service and Ards and North Down Council.

In relation to question two, the Northern Ireland Office has not seconded any Civil Servants out to external organisations.

If you wish to discuss this letter or our handling of your request, please contact the Freedom of Information Team using the contact details provided at the top of the first page. Please remember to quote your reference in any correspondence.

Thank you for your interest in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of information Team

Corporate Operations Group

1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

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Complaints

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Freedom of Information Team
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH
foi@nio.gov.uk

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Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

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Northern
Ireland
Office

Her Loyal Voice Report

3 messages

27 May 2021 at 13:31

To: SOS Lewis
Cc: PUS Mailbox, PS SOS < >, SpAds PS, Senior
Leadership Team < >, Political Affairs < >, Engage < >

PO - for the next box please.

Please find attached note and report by Her Loyal Voice on women in Loyalism. If you have any questions please let me know.

Kind regards,

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 Northern Ireland Office logo

 **Signature banner: Passionate about Northern Ireland: flexible, empowering, inclusive**

2 attachments

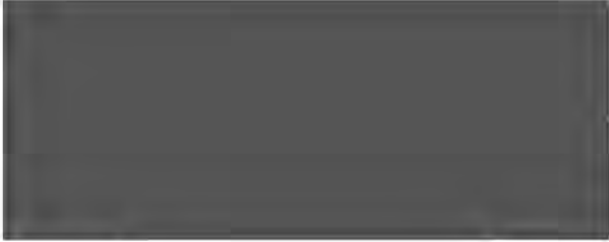
Section 36

3 June 2021 at 15:05

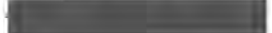
Have finally read this report. Would be good to meet the team behind her Loyal Voice, and any equivalent group in the nationalist community (if there is an equivalent).

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]


Section 36**Min Walker**

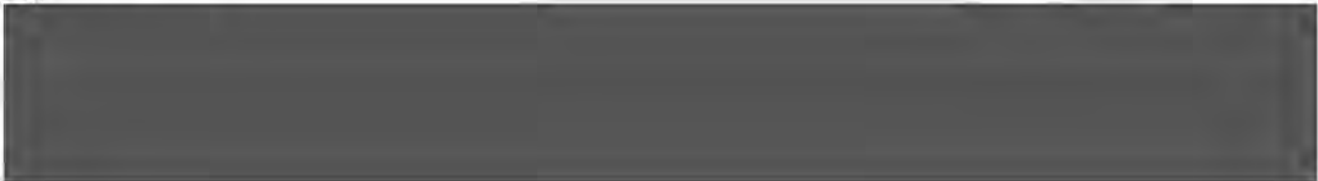
8 June 2021 at 22:49

To: Cc: SOS Lewis <PUS Mailbox <PS SOS SpAds PS <Senior Leadership Team <Political Affairs
<Engage Hi 

Minister Walker reviewed the sub and report and commented

"It would be interesting to see a more detailed report and any detail on the issues and attitudes relating to health and education in particular, interesting to note that healthcare and welfare are considered key advantages of remaining in the UK and the extent to which this has cross community cut through."

Kind regards,

[Quoted text hidden]
**Private Office of the Minister of State**


1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

Stormont House, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SH

[Quoted text hidden]




Northern
Ireland
Office

Her Loyal Voice: Meeting [REDACTED] tomorrow: Briefing

2 messages

21 June 2021 at 18:37

Hi [REDACTED]

Bringing the Her Loyal Voice report back into your inbox ahead of your meeting with [REDACTED] tomorrow at 14:30 and sharing the briefing [REDACTED] has prepared, which is attached here.

See you tomorrow
[REDACTED]

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PUS Meeting with [REDACTED] Her Loyal Voice

Section 36

2 November 2021 at 16:55

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[Quoted text hidden]



Section 36

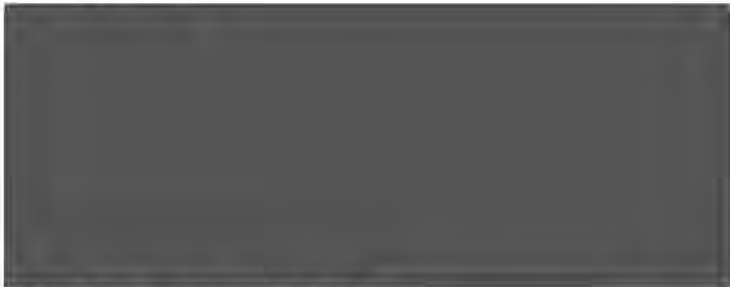
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 May 2021 11:18
To: PUS Mailbox [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: FW: LTL Meeting

Morning [REDACTED]

To confirm that LTL are free to meet next Tuesday at 1830. The meeting will take place at [REDACTED] This is an introductory meeting so I am happy to provide background info and lines to take if needed but I think we will be in listening mode.

I will attend the meeting too.

Many thanks,



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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Thu, 13 May 2021 at 10:54
Subject: FW: LTL Meeting
To: [REDACTED]



I have spoken to Let's Talk Loyalism and they are available to meet on Tuesday 18th May at 6.30p.m.

Please see names of attendees detailed below,

Is [REDACTED] content to come here to our premises or [REDACTED]

Thanks,

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 May 2021 10:17
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: LTL Meeting

[REDACTED]

Confirming for Tuesday evening's meeting at 6:30pm. Attendees are as follows:

[REDACTED]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 May 2021 20:24
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: LTL Meeting

[REDACTED] will come to you

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 May 2021 19:18
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: LTL Meeting

Hi [REDACTED]

Tuesday evening suits everyone around 6:30pm. Where is the meeting being held?

[REDACTED]
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 3:20:22 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: LTL Meeting

Does this suit for you guys to meet with [REDACTED]

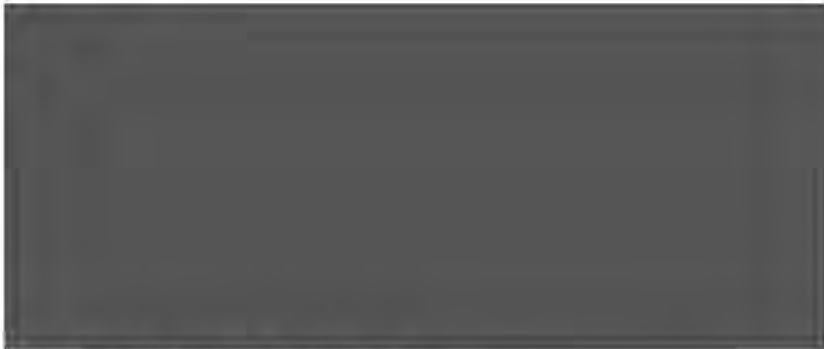
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 May 2021 15:15
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: LTL Meeting



I have spoken to PUS's office and they have confirmed she is free next Tuesday evening if that would suit the group? I will place a provisional hold in her diary but if that does not suit let me know and we will get something sorted.

Many thanks,



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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 May 2021 09:34
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PUS Lets Talk Loyalism Meeting

Hi [REDACTED]

We really appreciate yourself and [REDACTED] taking the time to meet with us. We can see great value in continuing these conversations with yourselves and we hope that we can build a strong relationship in order to promote our communities in the positive way they deserve.

Looking forward to speaking with you again soon.

Thanks, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 May 2021 09:18
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: PUS Lets Talk Loyalism Meeting

Morning [REDACTED]

I just wanted to pass on my thanks to all of you for giving up your time last night to meet with [REDACTED]. It was a very interesting meeting and I enjoyed hearing about your plans as a group, as well as the concerns you articulated around the Protocol and wider perceptions of loyalism and loyalist culture.

This is a link to the Lord Frost article in the Mail on Sunday which [REDACTED] referenced last night.

We will be suggesting to the Secretary of State that he meets you, however, we don't have control of his diary or schedule. In the meantime, please stay in touch and also let me know when your Radio 4 interview is due to go out.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

On Tue, 18 May 2021 at 16:27, [REDACTED] wrote:

[REDACTED]

Not a problem....arrive early.

[REDACTED] will be here to let you in and there will be 4 members of the group attending tonight:

[REDACTED]

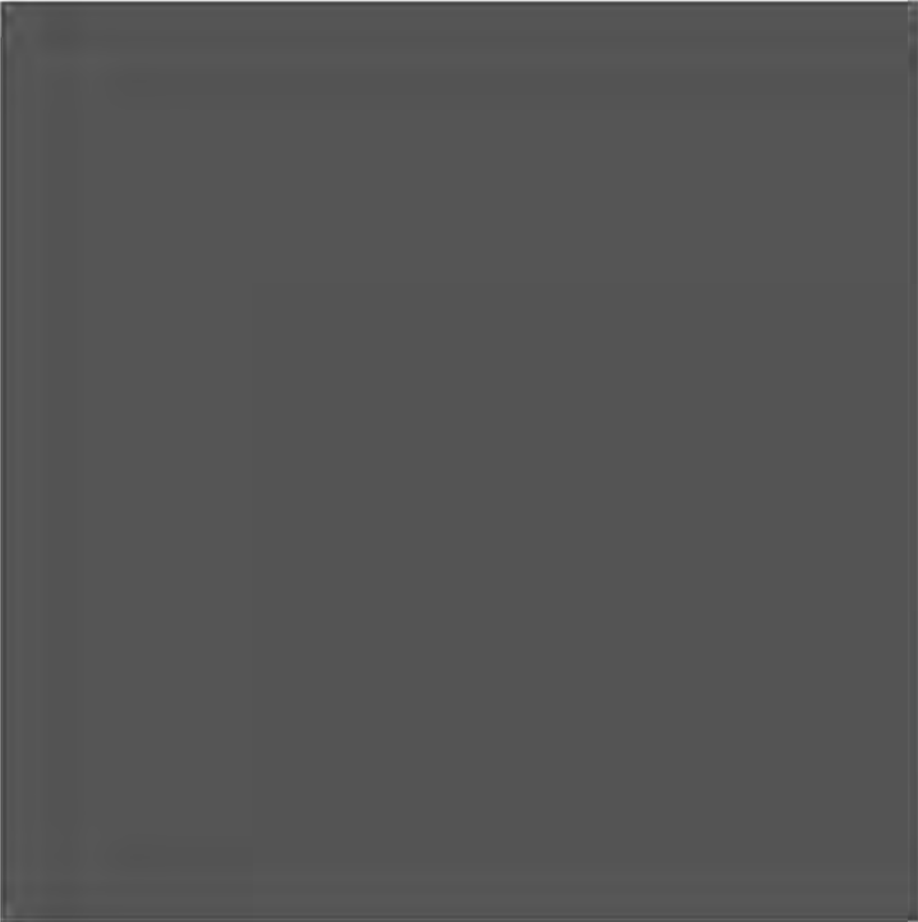
[REDACTED] mobile number is [REDACTED] in case there is any problems.

Tell [REDACTED] huge thank you from me.

I will not be here but it will all go fine. You will be in safe hands with [REDACTED]

Chat soon.

[REDACTED]



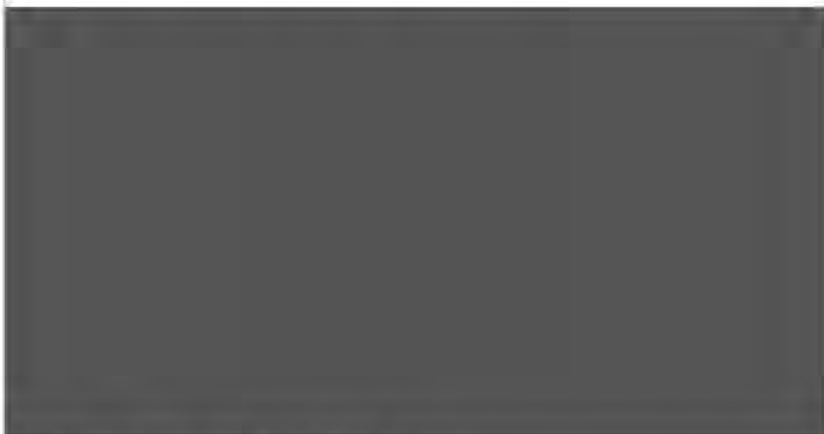
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 May 2021 16:19
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: PUS Lets Talk Loyalism Meeting

Afternoon [REDACTED]

Just to confirm that everything for tonight is still okay on our side. I am sorry about this but, if it is okay with you, [REDACTED]'s private secretary has asked that I arrive a little before her, just 5-10 min. If that doesn't suit and the group want to take time to do a pre-brief for themselves then I am more than happy to wait outside.

In case you need it my own mobile number is [REDACTED]

Many thanks and I will see you later.



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PUS Mailbox <[redacted]>

Re: Let's Talk Loyalism Meeting

1 message

PUS Mailbox [redacted]

12 May 2021 at 14:59

Hi [redacted]

[redacted] is happy to meet them out of working hours. She could do next Tuesday evening if that works.

Thanks
[redacted]

On Wed, 12 May 2021 at 14:47, [redacted] wrote:
Afternoon [redacted]

I hope you are well. I was talking to [redacted] earlier today and we discussed the possibility of [redacted] meeting the Let's Talk Loyalism (LTL) Group. [redacted] is supporting the group and they use [redacted] as a base however a meeting during the day would be very hard to facilitate - [redacted] and cannot attend meetings before 1630.

This first meeting will be organised through [redacted] but once [redacted] has met the group we will be able to take future engagement forward through LTL directly. Do you have any indication of [redacted] availability in order to set up a visit?

Many thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]
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1 message

21 June 2021 at 17:23

Reply-to: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] shared a document

[REDACTED] has invited you to **edit** the following document:

Hi [REDACTED]

Further to our conversation just now, I have cobbled together a few pages for the HLV meeting tomorrow. See attached.

I'll send across a copy of the full report separately if you want to share with [REDACTED]

Cheers

 PUS Meeting with [REDACTED] Her Loyal Voice

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You have received this email because [REDACTED] shared a document with you from Google Docs.

Google Workspace

From: Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP <Patersono@parliament.uk>
Date: Sat, 12 Sep 2020 at 07:17
Subject: FW: Agreement (Case Ref: OP7120)
To: <[REDACTED]>

I would be grateful for a response which I can share with my constituent.

Best wishes,

Owen

The Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 8 September 2020 13:48
To: PATERSON, Owen
Subject: Agreement

Owen, I would be very pleased if you ask Michael Gove or Boris himself why it has taken until now for them to realise there are "discrepancies" or whatever they are calling them, in the withdrawal agreement they signed off on with the EU, several months ago!

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

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RT HON OWEN PATERSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

5th September 2019

Dear Boris,

We all support the Belfast Agreement, and want to see the power-sharing institutions up and running again. But, as you know, the collapse of the Executive in January 2017 has now left Northern Ireland without effective government for over two and a half years. I have heard countless statements from Ministers urging further talks between the political parties in Northern Ireland, but it is plain that Sinn Féin will not co-operate.

As a result, vital public services are being neglected and health and education outcomes are suffering. It is wholly admirable that you have stated your intention to be the Prime Minister for the "whole United Kingdom"; we have a responsibility to all citizens wherever they are in the UK to address declining public service outcomes.

The Strule campus – which I first visited as Shadow Secretary of State in 2007 – is a brilliant Shared Future project to develop 6 new schools on the former Lisanelly barracks in Omagh. Without effective decision making from the Executive and with the failure to strike a budget, the project is on hold and its procurement process has been suspended. Just one school has been built.

Northern Ireland is now falling behind the rest of the UK on almost every national measure of health outcomes. Cancer treatment targets are not being delivered and are deteriorating. New drugs and novel diagnostic tests with the potential to save lives cannot be rolled out as there is no Minister to authorise them. Four of Northern Ireland's five health trusts have been among the 10 worst emergency department performers in the UK, and patients have reported up to 3-year waits for a first specialist appointment in some areas.

The tragedy is that the plans for delivering the change which health and social care services need already exist. The ambitious "Delivering Together" plan was launched in October 2016 following a report by Professor Rafael Bengoa, but it cannot be implemented without strong political decision making.

It ought not to be controversial to argue that Northern Ireland's citizens deserve better than this. I very much hope that the Government will recognise the urgent need to take adequate powers in order to reverse these alarming trends and improve the lives of citizens in Northern Ireland.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Owen Paterson', with a large, stylized initial 'O'.

The Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP

cc The Rt Hon Julian Smith MP

Official Seal of the Office of the Minister of Health, Northern Ireland

11-10000-10000



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Mr Owen Paterson MP

2nd November 2020

Dear Owen

Thank you for forwarding your email query from Mr Paul Fenwick on 08 September 2020 in which he asked about the Government's approach to the Withdrawal Agreement.

The Government has taken limited and reasonable steps in the UK Internal Market Bill to create a legal safety net by taking powers in reserve. If used, these powers would mean Ministers can guarantee the integrity of our United Kingdom, protect the integrity of the UK's internal market and ensure the Government is always able to deliver on its commitments to the people of Northern Ireland. This has been done in order to make sure we can always deliver the wider objective, recognised in the Protocol itself: to protect the Belfast ("Good Friday") Agreement.

The Protocol was designed as a way of implementing the needs of our exit from the EU in a way that worked for Northern Ireland and in particular for maintaining the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the gains of the peace process, and the delicate balance of interests across communities. It explicitly depends on the consent of the people of Northern Ireland for its continued existence. As we implement the Protocol this must be kept in mind.

One consequence of the fact that the Protocol had to solve very complicated issues is that certain elements were left for agreement after the UK left the EU. These provisions were drafted in a broad-brush way with the detail left to be resolved in the

Joint Committee during 2020. We continue to work with the EU in the Joint Committee to agree the approach to these issues.

The Prime Minister has been clear that we still hope to achieve agreement through the Joint Committee process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robin Walker', written in a cursive style.

ROBIN WALKER MP
MINISTER OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



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Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

25 October 2019

Dear Owen,

Thank you for your letter of 5th September regarding the situation in Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister's office passed it to my department, so I am responding on his behalf.

I share your frustration and disappointment that the people of Northern Ireland have now been without devolved government for 1000 days. The demonstration at Stormont last Sunday sent a clear message that NI citizens are fed up with the impasse and want their MLA's to get back to work. Constituents from across the country have written to me on important issues including those you have mentioned - in health, education and public services - these need to be dealt with by a restored NI Executive. It is very clear that we need Stormont up and running again.

In this financial year's budget for Northern Ireland, the UK Government has provided an increase in key areas of public services, particularly health (+3.8%) and education (+1.1%). It is obvious, however, that difficult decisions must be taken to secure the long-term future of both sectors.

School provision will certainly be a top priority for an incoming education minister. The Department of Education has received £58 million under the Confidence and Supply agreement, which has gone some way to addressing funding pressures, but several teachers and parents have written to my department expressing concerns over closures.

Likewise, medical professionals and patients are aware that Northern Ireland's health service is struggling. Waiting lists show an increasing gap between supply of, and demand for, procedures, and there are many other matters, from community pharmacies and locum doctors to implementation of the transformation programme, in dire need of attention.

I am doing all I can as Secretary of State to bring the parties into a restored executive so that locally accountable ministers can serve those who elected them. The Prime Minister fully supports my efforts and I appreciate the backing of you and other parliamentarians who tirelessly speak up for the people of Northern Ireland at Westminster and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julian Smith', with a stylized, angular initial 'J'.

RT HON JULIAN SMITH MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

SEG Suggestion Box

This is the Staff Engagement Group's Suggestion Box. It is a means for all staff to raise absolutely any issue at any time. It will also be used thematically, to understand more about issues that the Staff Engagement Group (SEG) have already identified as pertinent.

If you have spotted something that doesn't work as efficiently as it could, or have a burning idea about how to improve an aspect of working in the NIO, then let us know!

This box is monitored by the SEG Suggestions Coordinator who will take your suggestion to the next SEG meeting for discussion and direct it to the relevant team to be actioned. If you choose to leave your name we will be able to thank and recognise you for any change resulting for your suggestion. Your name will be kept alongside your suggestion on SEG's tracker for this purpose but will not be included when a response is published on the intranet. Suggestions can also be left anonymously.

Let us know what you think! You can make anonymous suggestions about any aspect of work in the NIO, which SEG will then consider and give you a response.

There are two ways to put forward a suggestion:

1. The [ONLINE suggestion box](#)
2. Your team's SEG rep – or indeed any SEG rep

The Suggestions Box is totally anonymous unless you choose to include your name.

SEG will publish the reply to every suggestion, so keep an eye on the [tracker](#) for the answer to yours!



- A conversion exercise has been announced for staff on Fixed Term Contracts.
- Recruitment tables have been published on the intranet.
- A blog post is being written that includes the advice provided by the British Dyslexia Association.
- The 'Working with Private Office' guidance has been updated and can be found on the intranet. The guidance on working with Ministers also includes legal correspondence.
- Deputy Directors have been asked to nominate one of their team to be the local intranet editor who will be responsible for keeping the team information on the intranet up to date. The comms team have also offered training for team intranet editors.