[redacted]

From: FOI
Sent: 13 June 2019 15:27
To: [redacted]
Subject: FOI 125-19

Categories: Transferred to Skynet
SharePointLocationUrl: [redacted]
SharePointAbsoluteFileUrl: [redacted]

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 dated 23 May 2019, concerning:

I would like to request the following information, from 8th February 2019 to the day this request is processed (23/05/2019):

1) All internal correspondence and communications held by the Electoral Commission that mentions, or refers to, the Brexit Party.

2) All external correspondence and communications that mentions, or refers to, the Brexit Party. I would expect this to include correspondence and communications between the Electoral Commission and representatives of the Brexit Party.

I define correspondence and communications as including (but not limited to) the following:
- Emails
- Minutes and notes taken during meetings, including minutes and notes taken during meetings with representatives of the Brexit Party
- Letters
- Memos
- Briefings
- Research documents
- Press clippings
- Presentation slides
- Notes taken during telephone conversations

The Commission has considered your request against section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Section 12 of the FOIA applies where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit for central government is £600. Cost is calculated at a rate of £25 per hour of work, this means that requests for information that exceed 24 hours can be refused.

Your request for information is quite broad. It includes both internal and external correspondence that mentions or refers to The Brexit Party over a period of approximately four months.

In order to understand whether section 12 applies, we conducted a search for relevant information. On a first and limited search, we identified in excess of 1500 records.

In order to estimate how long it would take for us to comply with your request, we reviewed a sample of those records for relevance to determine if the information was in scope of the request and then filed it. It took a total of at least three minutes per record.

Based on our workings we believe that it would take a minimum of 75 hours to identify, sort and filter the information relevant to your request.

This does not account for time spent:

- Issuing any necessary third party notices to inform the relevant parties of our request for information.
- Conducting a full search of our systems to identify any relevant additional records and retrieving that information.

As you can see, demonstrated above, the information that you have requested is exempt on the basis that it will exceed the appropriate cost limit. A public authority is not required to work up until section 12 applies.

In order for the Commission to consider your request for information please can I ask that you narrow the scope of your entire request. In order to do this you could:

- Further limit the timeframe of your request;
- Limit your request to external or internal correspondence;
- Further limit the subject of your request.

I cannot guarantee that a revised request will fall below the cost of compliance.

You may also be aware that a public authority is able to accept a fee for the additional cost in order to process the request. Please note that the Commission does not accept payment in cases where section 12 is applied.

Your request for information will now be placed on hold until such time the necessary clarification is received. In the event that no clarification is received your request will be closed on the following date, 21 June 2019.

[redacted]
Access to Information Officer (FOI and DPA)

The Electoral Commission
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