From: FOI
Sent: 16 April 2018 17:35
To: [redacted]
Cc: FOI <FOI@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: FOI 040/18 Money Transferred to DUP - Response

Dear [redacted],

Our Ref: FOI 040/18

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated **07 March 2018.**

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and regrets that on this occasion we have not done so.

Your request is in bold below followed by our response.

This email constitutes a freedom of information request seeking disclosure of all information held by the Electoral Commission regarding the source(s) of all/any money transferred by the Constitutional Research Council to the Democratic Unionist Party in particular but not exclusively as regards the 2016 EU referendum.

Our response is as follows:

We are unable to confirm or deny as to whether or not we hold any information in relation to your request. The Commission is prohibited by legislation from releasing information in relation to donations that may have been given to a registered Northern Ireland political party. Section 71E of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) as amended by the Transparency of Donations and Loans etc. (Northern Ireland Political Parties) Oder 2018 places a duty of confidentiality on the Commission in relation to information that relates to donations from Northern Ireland recipients or information relating to our function in this area. We consider this information exempt under section 44(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Section 44 exempts from disclosure any information if its disclosure is prohibited by any enactment. As stated, the information requested, should the Commission hold it, in specifically prohibited from being released by section 71E of PPERA.

You can find previous Freedom of Information 2000 requests referencing the Constitutional Research Council on our website here:

https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/freedom-of-information-requests

I trust that this information satisfies your request. The Commission strives to be an open, transparent authority, but in some circumstances we cannot responsibly release requested information, and we ask for your understanding in this regard.

If you are not satisfied with this response, please note that the Commission operates a review procedure, details of which can be found on the Commission website at: http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/about-us/freedom-of-information-requests/how-do-I-make-an-foi-request

Please also note that if you have exhausted all internal Commission review procedures and you are still not satisfied you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner. Details of this procedure can be found on the ICO website: https://ico.org.uk/

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
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