

From: FOI
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FOI 133/18 - BBC Spotlight "Brexit, Dark Money and the DUP"
Date: 17 September 2018 10:00:34
Attachments: [FoI-133-18-GC-response.pdf](#)
[FoI-133-18-GC-letter.pdf](#)

Dear [REDACTED],

Our Ref: FOI 133/18

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated **08 August 2018**.

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and regrets that we have not done so within the statutory timeframe of twenty working days

Your request is in bold below followed by our response.

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act regarding the BBC Spotlight film "Brexit, Dark Money and the DUP" broadcast on the 26th June 2018 on BBC 1.

Please confirm possession of and provide the following information held by the Electoral Commission.

- 1. All correspondence between Ministers / Special advisors / MLAs / Councillors and the Electoral Commission in relation to the BBC Spotlight film originally broadcast on the 26th June 2018.**

Our response is as follows:

We hold some of the information you have requested.

Although you did not request correspondence from MPs we have considered that your request meant correspondence from elected representatives and have included this.

I trust that this information satisfies your request. The Commission strives to be an open, transparent authority.

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]

Access to Information Officer (FOI and DPA)

The Electoral Commission

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The Electoral Commission

Mr Gregory Campbell MP
Treasurer
Democratic Unionist Party
91 Dundela Avenue
Belfast
BT4 3BU

27 June 2018

Dear Mr Campbell

I am writing to you as the registered treasurer of the Democratic Unionist Party as I have concerns about comments attributed to you and broadcast on the BBC Spotlight documentary aired last night in Northern Ireland.

The programme alleged that you were not concerned with the law on permissibility of donations. In support it broadcast extracts of a recording that it said was of you discussing the receipt of a donation. Whilst these were only a small part of any interview you may have had with a journalist and no wider context was given, the comments that were broadcast are a sufficient cause for concern for me to write to remind you of your legal obligations under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).

There is a duty on the party and you as registered treasurer to ensure that any donation accepted by the party is from a permissible source (section 56 PPERA). If the party and treasurer do not comply with the legislation relating to the permissibility, and the acceptance or return of a donation, the party and the registered treasurer may each be guilty of a criminal offence.

When reporting donations to the Commission, you as the registered treasurer are required to make a declaration as to the completeness and accuracy of the report that you are delivering to us. Anyone knowingly or recklessly making a false declaration under this section commits an offence.

The Electoral Commission
3 Bunhill Row
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The Electoral Commission

As you will appreciate from this reminder of your legal obligations as treasurer, it is not correct to say that the Electoral Commission is responsible for ensuring your party only accepts permissible donations.

I trust this letter assists you. If you have any further questions regarding your obligations as registered treasurer, regarding donations or any other aspect of the rules, please do not hesitate to contact our advice service on 0333 103 1928.

Yours sincerely



Louise Edwards
Head of Regulation



Democratic Unionist Party



Louise Edwards
Head of Regulation
The Electoral Commission
3 Bunhill Row
London
EC1Y 8YZ

3rd July 2018

Dear Ms Edwards

Thank you for your letter dated 27th June. I am disappointed that you felt the need to write to me on the basis of elements of a BBC Northern Ireland Spotlight programme broadcast on 26th June, which attempted to attribute a meaning to a part of an interview given by me to an individual not associated with the BBC. I also regret that you appear (albeit to a limited degree) to be relying on biased BBC output in arriving at a point where you indicate in your letter that you have sufficient cause for concern.

For my part I am clear that what was broadcast was both out of context and used in the programme in an attempt to convey an incorrect impression that I am not familiar with my responsibilities as a registered treasurer of a registered political party under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA 2000).

For the avoidance of any doubt I am fully aware of both my legal duties as registered treasurer and that of the Democratic Unionist Party in relation to the permissibility of donations and the associated declaration to be made to the Electoral Commission, and indeed indicated that I was, in an untransmitted section of the aforesaid interview.

91 Dundela Avenue
BELFAST
BT4 3BU

Telephone [REDACTED]

I trust this clarification addresses any concerns that the inaccurate selected excerpts may have given the Electoral Commission.

Yours sincerely



Gregory Campbell MP
Treasurer
Democratic Unionist Party

91 Dundela Avenue
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