From: FOI
To: [redacted]
Subject: FOI 163/18 - Legal disputes - response
Date: 15 November 2018 09:06:33

Dear [redacted],

Our Ref: FOI 163/18

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated **19 October 2018.**

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and has done so within the statutory timeframe of twenty working days.

Your request is in bold below followed by our response.

1. For each of the last 10 financial years, and the current financial year to 18.10.18 please state: The number of legal disputes between your department and other central government departments and non-departmental government bodies.

For each, please provide
- A list of the court cases related to the dispute, with current status (resolved or ongoing) -Total time period of the dispute from bringing of proceedings until conclusion.
-Total cost in legal fees and related administration costs to your department

2. For each of the last 10 financial years, and the current financial year to 18.10.18 please supply the number of legal disputes between yours department and a UK local council (including district, county, borough, unitary, parish).

For each, please provide
-A list of the court cases related to the dispute with current status (resolved or ongoing) -Total time period of the dispute from bringing of proceedings until conclusion.
-Total cost in legal fees and related administration costs to your department.

3. For each of the last 10 financial years, and the current financial year to 18.10.18 please state the number of legal disputes between your department and a regional mayoral department.

For each, please provide
-A list of the court cases related to the dispute, with current status (resolved or ongoing) -Total time period of the dispute from bringing of proceedings until conclusion.
-Total cost in legal fees and related administration costs to your department

Our response is as follows:

Firstly, we would like to clarify that the Electoral Commission is not a government department or a non-departmental government body. The Commission is an

independent statutory body that is accountable to parliament. It is established under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000.

We have interpreted your request for the above details of “legal disputes” to refer to legal proceedings.

We hold some of the information you have requested.

We have identified one legal dispute that meets the criteria for your request.

The relevant case is: *Forest Heath District Council (R on the application of) v Electoral Commission Boundary Committee for England* [2009] EWCA Civ 1296.

This was a legal dispute between a number of local authorities and the Boundary Committee for England of the Electoral Commission. The case has been resolved.

The total time period of the case from issuing proceedings until conclusion was one year and four months. The proceedings began on 19 September 2008 and the case ended with the refusal of appeal by the Supreme Court on 27 January 2010.

We do not hold the information that you have requested in relation to the total cost of legal fees and related administration costs for this dispute.

In April 2010 the functions of the Boundary Committee for England of the Electoral Commission were transferred to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The Electoral Commission no longer exercises these functions.

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’s 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)

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