[redacted]

From: FOI
Sent: 18 June 2019 11:09
To: [redacted]
Subject: FOI 124-19 - Response
Attachments: BrownG-to-PosnerB-2019-05-20-Brexit-Party-Funding-Questions (redacted).pdf

Dear [redacted],

Our Ref: FOI-124-19

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated **21/05/2019.**

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.

Please provide any information regards contact you have had with Gordon Brown regards the forthcoming European Elections and.or funding of such elections

Our response is as follows:

We hold the information you have requested.

Please find attached one letter received from Mr Brown. No response has, as yet, been sent. That is the sole information we hold within the scope of your request.

Section 40(2):

You will notice that certain personal details have been redacted from the document we are releasing. Section 40(2) provides for an exemption where the information requested constitutes personal data as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), and where release of the information requests would breach one of the data protection principles. Some of the information contained in the requested information falls within the description of personal data as defined by section 1 of the DPA because the information relates directly to an identifiable living individual.

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]

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

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Bob Posner
Chief Executive, The Electoral Commission

20 May 2019

Dear Mr Posner,

I am writing to the Electoral Commission and the authorities at the European Parliament to request that you investigate the sources of funding for the 'Brexit Party', and in particular whether any funding is coming from abroad and from whom – including whether any funding is coming from Russia; and whether proper and full declarations are being made in line with election rules.

There are immediate reasons why an investigation is now urgent and essential.

The 'Leave.EU' campaign is the subject of a criminal investigation by the National Crime Agency, and two other investigations by the Metropolitan Police and the Information Commissioner's Office.

Leave.EU's best-known funder, Arron Banks – whose commercial interests have never been fully and satisfactorily divulged and are under investigation, and who has long term contacts with Russia – has admitted that he has secretly funded Nigel Farage at least £450,000 during the time that Mr Farage has held public office as a European MEP – payments that raise questions about conflicts of interest and which should have been declared.

Now Mr Farage heads the new 'Brexit Party', which is making questionable claims about the true source of its funding, especially claims about multiple, small, anonymous donations at a time when

the Electoral Commission has warned of the dangers of such donations being a cover for dirty money. I understand that on their website the 'Brexit Party' are able to receive donations from foreign sources – even in foreign currency.

Given the Electoral Commission's duty to monitor every UK party's election finance and spending, it is important that we do not wait for months after the event to investigate dubious claims by a party with links to people who have been under investigation by you in the past.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]