

From: [FOI](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FOI 192/18 - Monitoring staffs political activity - response
Date: 04 December 2018 13:34:59

Dear [REDACTED]

Our Ref: FOI 192/18

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated **24 November 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.

It's been brought to my attention that Electoral Commission staff have been recruited directly from the Treasury which was found to have acted improperly during the referendum with the publication of intentionally misleading financial estimates which have since been proven as false.

- 1. How many of these individuals from the Treasury were absorbed into the Electoral Commission?**
- 2. What monitoring was done of their political motivations prior to their appointment?**

Our response is as follows:

We hold the information you have requested.

- 1. How many of these individuals from the Treasury were absorbed into the Electoral Commission?**

Information regarding an individual's past employment is considered to be personal data and is therefore exempt under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

- 2. What monitoring was done of their political motivations prior to their appointment?**

Below is a description of the usual monitoring process.

Application stage:

We check for political activity firstly at application for employment stage (ie details of any political or campaigning activity within the last year). We tell candidates: "**Political activity** - Certain political activities may mean you cannot work for us. Everyone is asked to declare political activities as part of the online application process." The selection panel determine whether it is such as to raise doubts as to the eligibility or suitability of the candidate for appointment.

Monitoring:

In addition there is an annual monitoring process for employees (political activity and conflict of interest). HR send out a communication once a year asking employees to update the information in our HR Online system. If there is anything to declare the employee must complete the same form as job applicants and submit it. HR chase up to make sure all employees respond. A report is made of the findings to our Executive Team and any actions required are taken, following our procedures.

Exemptions:

Use of Section 40(2).

Section 40(2) provides 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. The information contained in the requested information falls within the description of personal data as defined by section 1 of the Data Protection Act 2018 (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,



Access to Information Officer (FOI and DPA)

The Electoral Commission

FOI@electoralcommission.org.uk

electoralcommission.org.uk