From: FOI
To: [redacted]
Subject: FOI 007-19 GE2017 Candidate Spending Return - response
Date: 17 January 2019 12:45:33

Dear [redacted]

Our Ref: FOI 007-19

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated **14 January 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.

1. **Under the Freedom of Information regulations I wish to request copies of all the GE2017 Candidate Spending Return forms submitted by all Liberal Democrats Candidates standing in the 59 Scottish Constituencies.**

Our response is as follows:

We hold the information you have requested.

We do hold copies of the candidate spending returns you have requested. However, we consider this information is exempt under Section 21 as the information is publicly available elsewhere. All candidates who contested the 2017 UK Parliamentary General Election were required to submit their returns of candidate spending to the relevant Returning Officer within 35 days of the declaration of the result. The Returning Officer is the primary holder of this information and has a legal duty to make the returns available for inspection for a period of two years after the date it is received. You should contact the relevant Returning Officers to arrange to inspect the returns.

Under section 21, information is exempt from disclosure if it is publicly available elsewhere. Information is taken to be reasonably accessible if it is information which another authority is obliged by legislation to make publicly available. Under sections 88 and 89 of the Representation of the People Act 1983, Returning Officers need to make the returns available for public inspection. The Information Commissioner's Office recognises that although something may only be available for public inspection, it will still be reasonably accessible. The Commission considers the legislative right of access to this information is through the relevant Returning Officer.

I trust that this information satisfies your request.

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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