[redacted]

From: FOI
Sent: 21 July 2023 14:06
To: [redacted]
Subject: FOI 085-23 - Response

Dear [redacted],

Our Ref: FOI 085-23

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated 23 June 2023.

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 shown below followed by our response.

You have asked for the following information:
Please send me a copy of all the raw data received from returning officers in relation to voter ID at the May 2023 local elections (on which your publication at https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/our-views-and-research/our-research/voter-id-may-2023-local-elections-england-interim-analysis was based). I assume the data was entered into a spreadsheet or a database. If so, please send me a copy of the spreadsheet or the full dataset exported from a database. If you hold the data in some other form, please let me know and explain how it is held. I would like the information to be emailed to me.

Our response is as follows:

We hold the information you have requested.

The Commission has collected data on the impact of voter ID at the May 2023 elections from local authority Returning Officers. The full dataset is being collated and checked for accuracy. We intend to publish that data, at a local authority level, alongside our full election report in September 2023.

The information that you have requested is therefore exempt under section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Section 22 provides for an exemption where the information requested is intended for future publication.

Section 22 is a qualified exemption which requires the public interest test to be considered. We understand that there is a legitimate public interest in the information you have requested, and the need for transparency in relation to electoral events, specifically the publication of key statistical data; however, it is not in the public's interest to release partial data or an incomplete analysis of that data.

There is a clear need for the information requested to remain within our predetermined publication timetable, and as such we determine the exemption remains in favour of withholding the information.

The Commission strives to be an open, transparent authority and 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: https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/freedom-information/make-a-freedom-information-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

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