From: FOI
To: [redacted]
Subject: FOI 067-25 - Response
Date: 02 September 2025 18:15:45

Dear [redacted]

Our Ref: FOI 067-25

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated 05 June 2025.

On 19 June 2025, the Commission emailed you to extend the FOI request due to the consideration of the Public Interest Test.

On 01 August, we again extended this as we needed to consider Section 36 of the FOI Act.

The Commission aims to respond to requests for information promptly and has done so within the extended timeframe.

Your request is in bold below, followed by our response.

According to recent media reports, Reform UK announced that it will start accepting donations in cryptocurrency. In light of this, please provide the following information:
- Internal correspondence and communications that mention, or relate to, the use of cryptocurrency for donations.
- External correspondence and communications that mention, or relate to, the use of cryptocurrency for donations.

Our response is as follows:

A full search of communications relating to the scope has been carried out within the Electoral Commission. We hold some of the information you have requested.

We are releasing emails with various media outlets confirming our position.

However, we found that publishing in full both internal and external communications would inhibit:
(i) the free and frank provision of advice, and/or
(ii) the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation and/or
(iii) **would otherwise prejudice, the effective conduct of public affairs**.

Thus, an assessment of a section 36 (2)(b) and (c) of the FOI Act has been carried out. This assessment includes full details of our understanding and the scope of the Section 36 (2)(b) and (c) exemptions as well as a public interest test. As the content of your FOI request is a live issue, we refer to the need for a safe space. We feel that releasing ongoing internal and external dialogues may prevent future dialogues from taking place, causing a chilling effect. We feel that disclosure of discussions would inhibit free and frank discussions, and that the

loss of frankness would damage the quality of advice and deliberation.

The Commission may or may not hold information that, if held, would be exempt from disclosure under section 31 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We have explained the exemption and set out details on our considerations below.

Exemption: section 31(1)(g) and section 31(2)(c)

The Commission can neither confirm nor deny that we hold information that is exempt from disclosure under s.31(1)(g) and section 31(2)(c) of FOIA. Section 31(1)(g) exempts information from disclosure where that disclosure "would or would be likely to prejudice…the exercise by any public authority of its functions for any of the purposes specified in subsection (2)."

In this case, the relevant purpose in subsection 31(2) is 31(2)(c), which is "the purpose of ascertaining whether circumstances which would justify regulatory action in pursuance of any enactment exist or may arise…".

We can neither confirm nor deny holding information that falls under this exemption within the scope of your request, as confirming or denying holding the information could make it more difficult to enforce the law.

Public interest test

Section 31 is a qualified exemption, which means that we must consider whether the public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. There are a number of factors that are weighed in the balance to consider whether the public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. The factors that we have considered are laid out below.

Public interest in favour of disclosure

The Commission recognises that there is a general public interest in promoting transparency around the donations to political parties, how they are accepted and reported to the Commission. There is also a general public interest in how the Commission would approach regulatory decisions in relation to donations accepted in non-traditional direct monetary transactions and how our enforcement policies evolve. If held and could be released, the requested information may increase public trust in how the Commission makes fully informed, reasoned decisions.

Public interest against disclosure

So, the Commission can make regulatory policy and decisions based on a firm factual basis, it needs to be able to carry out inquiries as part of its regulatory powers and gather evidence and facts on a confidential basis.

To enable it to carry out effective enforcement policy and inquiries, the Commission depends on being able to secure co-operation from third parties. That co-operation is essential to the Commission's ability to meet its statutory functions. Releasing information, if held, could prevent the exchange of relevant information

in the future and have the effect of hindering future inquiries.

Third parties have a reasonable expectation that information, if provided to the Commission in the course of our inquiries, would not be made available to the public at large. If information provided during the Commission's inquiries was released, it would make third parties reluctant to co-operate and may prejudice interactions with them as well as others in the future.

We therefore judge the public interest in withholding the information if held to outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information.

To access these documents, you will need to use our secure document-sharing system, Objective Connect. You will receive an 'Invitation to Objective Connect Email Notification' (sent to the inbox of [redacted]). This notification will contain a link to enable you to start accessing your information. Please find below details on how to access the specific area we have set up for your documents.

1. Click on the link in the email.
2. You will be prompted to set up your username and password. Your username will be your email address, and your password can be whatever you like.
3. With your username and password, enter both details at the login screen and click 'login'.
4. You will now see your personal page, which will show the Share '**FOI 067-25**'.
5. By clicking on the name of the share, you will find your documents.
6. You may view any of these documents.
7. In addition, you may download a copy to your personal computer by selecting the 'download' option and then 'save'.

This service will be closed one month from our response date, which is **03 October 2025**.

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: 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

Information Team
FOI@electoralcommission.org.uk

The Electoral Commission
www.electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]
To: [redacted] Press
Subject: Electoral Commission query
Date: 02 June 2025 12:15:05

Hi [redacted]

Thanks for your call. Please see a statement from the Commission below in case it's useful.

Thanks
[redacted]

Our democracy needs political parties to be funded. Donations can come in many forms, including currency, crypto-currency and services in kind, such as loan of a venue, or printing a pamphlet. Parties can only accept donations from a permissible source. If a donation does not come from a permissible source, or if they cannot identify the donor, they must return it. Parties must make an honest assessment of the value of the donation at the time they receive it, and ensure they know the donor's name, address and contact details to assess their eligibility. Valuation of cryptocurrency should be done in the same way other types of donations are valued. For example, if a party is given property, goods or services free of charge or at a discount, they must value them at the market rate. The same rules on donations apply regardless of how the donation was received.

The value of a donation is calculated on the day of receipt, so in the context of cryptocurrencies, the party would need to know the donation's value on the day it was transferred to them. The value of a donation does not include any fees that may be incurred in the transfer of the donation. For example, some banks may charge fees for transferring large amounts of money.

Parties must accurately record and value donations, and we will help them do so, and then make the donations public as the law sets out. The Commission continues to review and adapt this support, and how we analyse donations.

Permissibility checks are crucial. We have highlighted that the existing law is not adequate to safeguard the UK political system against the entry of foreign money, and have recommended specific changes to the law to increase transparency of donations by unincorporated associations, including requiring money they receive towards their political contributions to be from permissible sources. We have also recommended that political parties should conduct enhanced know your donor checks on donations based on risk - this would apply to cryptocurrencies as well. And that they should not accept money from companies that have not made enough money in the UK to fund their donation or loan. The UK Government is currently considering our proposals.

[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 22:01
To: [redacted]@bbc.co.uk
Cc: Press
Subject: RE: Electoral Commission query

Hi [redacted]

Please see a further statement from the Commission below in case useful.

Thanks,
[redacted]

Our democracy needs political parties to be funded. Donations can come in many forms, including currency, crypto-currency and services in kind, such as loan of a venue, or printing a pamphlet. Parties can only accept donations from a permissible source. If a donation does not come from a permissible source, or if they cannot identify the donor, they must return it. Parties must make an honest assessment of the value of the donation at the time they receive it, and ensure they know the donor's name, address and contact details to assess their eligibility. Valuation of cryptocurrency should be done in the same way other types of donations are valued. For example, if a party is given property, goods or services free of charge or at a discount, they must value them at the market rate. The same rules on donations apply regardless of how the donation was received.

The value of a donation is calculated on the day of receipt, so in the context of cryptocurrencies, the party would need to know the donation's value on the day it was transferred to them. The value of a donation does not include any fees that may be incurred in the transfer of the donation. For example, some banks may charge fees for transferring large amounts of money.

Parties must accurately record and value donations, and we will help them do so, and then make the donations public as the law sets out. The Commission continues to review and adapt this support, and how we analyse donations.

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[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 14:51
To: [redacted]@bbc.co.uk
Cc: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Electoral Commission query

Hi [redacted]

The same rules apply to donations received in cryptocurrencies as any other donations. Parties need to collect sufficient information so that they can check the permissibility of the donation, and record and report it according to its value in British Pounds. You can read more about the permissibility of political party donations, including those received in cryptocurrencies in our guidance. We will continue to support parties to ensure their can meet their obligations and comply with the laws around donations.

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

Mobile: [redacted]
Press out of hours: [redacted]

From: [redacted]@ft.com>
Sent: 03 June 2025 17:22
To: [redacted]
Cc: Press
Subject: Re: Financial Times request

Thanks!

On Tue, 3 Jun 2025 at 17:21, [redacted]@electoralcommission.org.uk> wrote:

Hi [redacted] - we're expecting to publish these next week.

Thanks
[redacted]

From: [redacted]@ft.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 5:16:20 PM
To: [redacted]@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Cc: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Re: Financial Times request

Thanks a lot for this [redacted]

Quick q: when are you publishing Q1 donation data?

[redacted]

On Tue, 3 Jun 2025 at 16:57, [redacted]@electoralcommission.org.uk> wrote:

Hi [redacted]

Reform UK, nor any other registered political party, have reported any donations that they have identified as cryptocurrency.

Please see the below information for background in case useful.

Hope that helps.

Thanks,
[redacted]

Our democracy needs political parties to be funded. Donations can come in many forms, including currency, crypto-currency and services in kind, such as loan of a venue, or printing a pamphlet. Parties can only accept donations from a permissible source. If a donation does not come from a permissible source, or if they cannot identify the donor, they must return it. Parties must make an honest assessment of the value of the donation at the time they receive it, and ensure they know the donor's name, address and contact details to assess their eligibility. Valuation of cryptocurrency should be done in the same way other types of donations are valued. For example, if a party is given property, goods or services free of charge or at a

discount, they must value them at the market rate. The same rules on donations apply regardless of how the donation was received.

The value of a donation is calculated on the day of receipt, so in the context of cryptocurrencies, the party would need to know the donation's value on the day it was transferred to them. The value of a donation does not include any fees that may be incurred in the transfer of the donation. For example, some banks may charge fees for transferring large amounts of money.

Parties must check that donations they accept over £500 are permissible and report them to the Commission when they are over £11,180. Parties must accurately record and value donations, and we will help them do so, and then make the donations public as the law sets out. The Commission continues to review and adapt this support, and how we analyse donations.

Permissibility checks are crucial. We have highlighted that the existing law is not adequate to safeguard the UK political system against the entry of foreign money, and have recommended specific changes to the law to increase transparency of donations by unincorporated associations, including requiring money they receive towards their political contributions to be from permissible sources. We have also recommended that political parties should conduct enhanced know your donor checks on donations based on risk - this would apply to cryptocurrencies as well. And that they should not accept money from companies that have not made enough money in the UK to fund their donation or loan. The UK Government is currently considering our proposals.

[redacted]

From: [redacted]@ft.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 03, 2025 2:25 PM
To: [redacted]@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Financial Times request

Hi [redacted]

I hope you're well

The Good Law Project has done some digging and found 24 crypto donation accounts connected to Reform UK that have been receiving bitcoin since 2023 -- and has found that the accounts have received £430,398 overall.

The first transaction was on 11 November 2023 – a payment now worth £4,677. Fifteen further addresses began receiving bitcoin in April 2024.

A bitcoin transfer worth £20,671 the day it was made was sent to a Reform address on 2 December 2024.

1. Can you confirm whether this transaction was reported to the Electoral Commission?
2. Can you confirm whether any bitcoin or cryptocurrency donation has been reported to the Electoral Commission by Reform to date? If so, can you please provide details.
3. Can you confirm whether any bitcoin or cryptocurrency donations have been reported to the Electoral Commission by any party to date? If so, can you please provide details.

I would be grateful if you could get back to me on this by 5pm today.

Best wishes,
[redacted]

--
[redacted]
Financial Times
[redacted]@ft.com
[redacted]



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Financial Times
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[redacted]

Financial Times

[redacted]@ft.com



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From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 14:49
To: [redacted]; Press
Subject: RE: Bitcoin

Hi [redacted]

The same rules apply to donations received in cryptocurrencies as any other donations. Parties need to collect sufficient information so that they can check the permissibility of the donation, and record and report it according to its value in British Pounds. You can read more about the permissibility of political party donations, including those received in cryptocurrencies in our guidance. We will continue to support parties to ensure their can meet their obligations and comply with the laws around donations.

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 12:07
To: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Bitcoin

> Some people who received this message don't often get email from [redacted]@gmail.com. Learn why this is important

Good afternoon,

Following the announcement that Reform will accept donations in cryptocurrency, does the Electoral Commission have a position on this, specifically the traceability and ability for bitcoin ownership to be transferred? If it is possible for people to hide or obscure their identity when buying Bitcoin, will this position align with the legislation on donations to political parties?

Would the EC be able to guarantee that any bitcoin donations made to Reform were eligible donors and where the currency originated?

I look forward to hearing from you

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 02 June 2025 18:18
To: [redacted]; Press
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Re: Comment request: Reform UK bitcoin address

Hi[redacted]

Apologies for the delay in getting this to you. Hope the below is helpful.

Our democracy needs political parties to be funded. Donations can come in many forms, including currency, crypto-currency and services in kind, such as loan of a venue, or printing a pamphlet. Parties can only accept donations from a permissible source. If a donation does not come from a permissible source, or if they cannot identify the donor, they must return it. Parties must make an honest assessment of the value of the donation at the time they receive it, and ensure they know the donor's name, address and contact details to assess their eligibility. Valuation of cryptocurrency should be done in the same way other types of donations are valued. For example, if a party is given property, goods or services free of charge or at a discount, they must value them at the market rate. The same rules on donations apply regardless of how the donation was received.

The value of a donation is calculated on the day of receipt, so in the context of cryptocurrencies, the party would need to know the donation's value on the day it was transferred to them. The value of a donation does not include any fees that may be incurred in the transfer of the donation. For example, some banks may charge fees for transferring large amounts of money.

Parties must check that donations they accept over £500 are permissible and report them to the Commission when they are over £11,180. Since 2023, Reform UK have not reported any cryptocurrency donations over this threshold to the Commission.

Parties must accurately record and value donations, and we will help them do so, and then make the donations public as the law sets out. The Commission continues to review and adapt this support, and how we analyse donations.

Permissibility checks are crucial. We have highlighted that the existing law is not adequate to safeguard the UK political system against the entry of foreign money, and have recommended specific changes to the law to increase transparency of donations by unincorporated associations, including requiring money they receive towards their political contributions to be from permissible sources. We have also recommended that political parties should conduct enhanced know your donor checks on donations based on risk - this would apply to cryptocurrencies as well. And that they should not accept money from companies that have not made enough money in the UK to fund their donation or loan. The UK Government is currently considering our proposals.

Best,
[redacted]

[redacted]

From: [redacted]@goodlawproject.org>
Sent: Friday, May 30, 2025 17:42
To: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Cc: [redacted]@goodlawproject.org>
Subject: Comment request: Reform UK bitcoin address

Hi [redacted] and [redacted]

My apologies in advance for this, as I know have a separate pending request for comment and you are both very busy.

For now, the below is a bit more of an immediate priority request and I would be incredibly grateful if you might be able respond by **12pm on Monday**, if at all possible?

On Monday, we are planning to do a piece with the FT and on our website on:

- How Reform UK's bitcoin address has been taking and facilitating transactions since 2023, many of which exceed the £500 threshold and should be subject to PPERA rules.

- The bitcoin address has transferred the £30k+ total income/donations it has received so far to other wallets, apparently acting as a financial intermediary.

Please see attached for a screenshot of the bitcoin address being advertised on Reform UK's website.

We would like to check whether:

- The Electoral Commission is aware of Reform UK's bitcoin address and its transaction activities?

- Reform UK has registered any bitcoin donations/incoming transactions with the Electoral Commission since 2023?

- The Party treasurer is obliged to conduct permissibility checks on the origin of bitcoin donations being made to this address, if it is only being used an intermediary and if donations are being funnelled through it to other Reform Party linked bitcoin addresses or bank accounts?

-The Electoral Commission is aware that Reform UK is using a bitcoin address to solicit donations that is just one of several in a wider wallet linked to one account? This makes it difficult to track the myriad strands of bitcoin transactions being deposited into a single account.

-The regulator will investigate Reform UK's use of this bitcoin address to ensure it complies with PPERA/ electoral financing rules and laws?

Many thanks for your help,

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]



Website: https://goodlawproject.org/
Mobile: [redacted]



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From: [redacted]
Sent: 10 June 2025 16:25
To: [redacted]
Cc: Press
Subject: Re: Press enquiry - New Statesman

Hi [redacted]

Apologies for the delay getting back to you.

A party usually receives a donation on the day they take ownership of it. For example, if a donation is transferred directly into their bank account, they receive the donation on the date that it is received into their bank account. Financial services providers, such as cryptocurrency payment providers, are not regarded as agents of a registered party. There are no requirements in electoral law about where a party's financial services provider must be based. You can read more about this in our guidance.

Reform UK, nor any other registered political party, have reported any donations that they have identified as cryptocurrency. Parties must accurately record and value donations, and we will help them do so, and then make the donations public as the law sets out. The Commission continues to review and adapt this support, and monitor the ways that parties accept donations so we can provide proactive advice about how to comply with the law.

Hope that helps.

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]
[redacted]

From: [redacted]@newstatesman.co.uk>
Sent: Monday, June 09, 2025 5:43 PM
To: [redacted]@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Re: Press enquiry - New Statesman

Hi [redacted] no problem - I know it's short notice!

Thanks

[redacted]

From: [redacted]@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Sent: 09 June 2025 17:40
To: [redacted]@newstatesman.co.uk>
Subject: Re: Press enquiry - New Statesman

Hi [redacted]

Is it possible to get an extension on your deadline until tomorrow morning?

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]
[redacted]

From: [redacted]@newstatesman.co.uk>
Sent: Monday, June 09, 2025 10:29 AM
To: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Press enquiry - New Statesman

Hi [redacted]

thanks for your time on the phone just now. My questions relate to the new use of crypto for donations to UK political parties:

Does a crypto company which accepts payments on behalf of a party count as an "agent of a registered party" in the PPERA?

Do the party donation rules cover where the financial services provider used by a political party to accept donations should be based (ie in the UK or overseas)?

Also with regard to Reform as the first party to accept this type of donation - I'd like to know (for my background) if Reform approached the Electoral Commission to notify you of their intention to accept this type of donation and whether the Electoral Commission has conducted an assessment of either Reform's acceptance of crypto donations or crypto donations in general?

Many thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]
[redacted]
New Statesman

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From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 22:01
To: [redacted]; Press
Subject: RE: Cryptocurrency

Hi [redacted]

Please see a statement from the Commission below in case useful.

Thanks,
[redacted]

Our democracy needs political parties to be funded. Donations can come in many forms, including currency, crypto-currency and services in kind, such as loan of a venue, or printing a pamphlet. Parties can only accept donations from a permissible source. If a donation does not come from a permissible source, or if they cannot identify the donor, they must return it. Parties must make an honest assessment of the value of the donation at the time they receive it, and ensure they know the donor's name, address and contact details to assess their eligibility. Valuation of cryptocurrency should be done in the same way other types of donations are valued. For example, if a party is given property, goods or services free of charge or at a discount, they must value them at the market rate. The same rules on donations apply regardless of how the donation was received.

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[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 16:54
To: [redacted]@nytimes.com>; Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: RE: Cryptocurrency

Hi [redacted]

That's the correct page but please see the below background information as well in case helpful.

Thanks,
Conor

The same rules apply to donations received in cryptocurrencies as any other donations. Parties need to collect sufficient information so that they can check the permissibility of the donation, and record and report it according to its value in British Pounds. You can read more about the permissibility of political party donations, including those received in cryptocurrencies in our guidance. We will continue to support parties to ensure their can meet their obligations and comply with the laws around donations.

[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

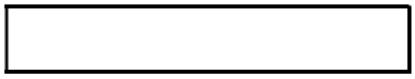
From: [redacted]@nytimes.com>
Sent: 30 May 2025 16:49
To: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Cryptocurrency

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lizzie.dearden@nytimes.com. Learn why this is important

Hi,
Would you be able to direct me to the Electoral Commission's rules on political donations using cryptocurrency? I found this page but wanted to check there was nothing elsewhere that may be relevant https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/political-party-donations-and-loans-great-britain/crowdfunding/permissibility

Many thanks,

--
[redacted]



From: [redacted]@politico.co.uk>
Sent: 02 June 2025 10:59
To: [redacted]
Cc: Press
Subject: Re: Electoral Commission query

Thanks so much, [redacted]

[redacted] | POLITICO | [redacted]

From: [redacted]@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Sent: Friday, May 30, 2025 10:01 PM
To: [redacted]@politico.co.uk>
Cc: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: RE: Electoral Commission query

EXTERNAL SENDER: Use caution with links and attachments.

Hi [redacted]

Please see a further statement from the Commission below in case useful.

Thanks,
[redacted]

Our democracy needs political parties to be funded. Donations can come in many forms, including currency, crypto-currency and services in kind, such as loan of a venue, or printing a pamphlet. Parties can only accept donations from a permissible source. If a donation does not come from a permissible source, or if they cannot identify the donor, they must return it. Parties must make an honest assessment of the value of the donation at the time they receive it, and ensure they know the donor's name, address and contact details to assess their eligibility. Valuation of cryptocurrency should be done in the same way other types of donations are valued. For example, if a party is given property, goods or services free of charge or at a discount, they must value them at the market rate. The same rules on donations apply regardless of how the donation was received.

The value of a donation is calculated on the day of receipt, so in the context of cryptocurrencies, the party would need to know the donation's value on the day it was transferred to them. The value of a donation does not include any fees that may be incurred in the transfer of the donation. For example, some banks may charge fees for transferring large amounts of money.

Parties must accurately record and value donations, and we will help them do so, and then make the donations public as the law sets out. The Commission continues to review and adapt this support, and how we analyse donations.

Permissibility checks are crucial. We have highlighted that the existing law is not adequate to safeguard the UK political system against the entry of foreign money, and have recommended specific changes to the law to increase transparency of donations by unincorporated associations, including requiring money they receive towards their political contributions to be from permissible sources. We have also recommended that political parties should conduct enhanced know your donor checks on donations based on risk - this would apply to cryptocurrencies as well. And that they should not accept money from companies that have not made enough money in the UK to fund their donation or loan. The UK Government is currently considering our proposals.

[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 14:50
To: [redacted]@politico.co.uk>
Cc: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Electoral Commission query

Hi [redacted]

The same rules apply to donations received in cryptocurrencies as any other donations. Parties need to collect sufficient information so that they can check the permissibility of the donation, and record and report it according to its value in British Pounds. You can read more about the permissibility of political party donations, including those received in cryptocurrencies in our guidance. We will continue to support parties to ensure their can meet their obligations and comply with the laws around donations.

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

Mobile: [redacted]
Press out of hours: [redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 22:01
To: [redacted]
Cc: Press
Subject: RE: Crypto donations

Hi [redacted]

Please see a statement from the Commission below.

Thanks,
[redacted]

Our democracy needs political parties to be funded. Donations can come in many forms, including currency, crypto-currency and services in kind, such as loan of a venue, or printing a pamphlet. Parties can only accept donations from a permissible source. If a donation does not come from a permissible source, or if they cannot identify the donor, they must return it. Parties must make an honest assessment of the value of the donation at the time they receive it, and ensure they know the donor's name, address and contact details to assess their eligibility. Valuation of cryptocurrency should be done in the same way other types of donations are valued. For example, if a party is given property, goods or services free of charge or at a discount, they must value them at the market rate. The same rules on donations apply regardless of how the donation was received.

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[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]@guardian.co.uk>
Sent: 30 May 2025 15:16
To: [redacted]@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Cc: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Re: Crypto donations

Thanks [redacted]

The guidance says "There must be a means of valuing the donation given in any cryptocurrency". Does the EC not intend to set clearer guidelines on this? It appears to me to be ambiguous at this stage where a donee could receive a donation at point X in cryptocurrency and accept it at point Y by which time the value of it may have fluctuated wildly. What stage is the donation valued, X, or Y? And what of transaction fees, gas fees, conversions by parties from crypto to crypto or crypto to GBP?

What procedures have the EC drawn up to examine potential issues with donor permissibility given the ease with which cryptocurrency transactions can be anonymised in terms of their origin vs. tracing regular bank transfers and payments to political parties? Is the Electoral Commission/its board concerned about the potential rise of cryptocurrencies for making donations; and that they might be used by unincorporated associations which already have significant transparency issues as the EC is aware?

Thank you

[redacted]

[redacted]
Guardian News and Media
[redacted]@theguardian.com
WhatsApp: [redacted]
BlueSky: [redacted]
Signal: [redacted]

Kings Place, 90 York Way,
London N1 9GU

[redacted]

On Fri, 30 May 2025 at 14:49, [redacted]@electoralcommission.org.uk> wrote:

> Hi [redacted]
>
> The same rules apply to donations received in cryptocurrencies as any other donations. Parties need to collect sufficient information so that they can check the permissibility of the donation, and record and report it according to its value in British Pounds. You can read more about the permissibility of political party donations, including those received in cryptocurrencies in our guidance. We will continue to support parties to ensure their can meet their obligations and comply with the laws around donations.

Thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]@guardian.co.uk>
Sent: 30 May 2025 11:09
To: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Crypto donations

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [redacted]@guardian.co.uk. Learn why this is important

Hello,

Wondered if there were any press statements or comment from the EC concerning political parties accepting donations from cryptocurrencies: e.g. in terms of transparency, what regulation applies, and ability of the EC to investigate as necessary?

Thank you

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Guardian News and Media

[redacted]@theguardian.com

WhatsApp: [redacted]

BlueSky:[redacted]

Signal: [redacted]

Kings Place, 90 York Way,
London N1 9GU

[redacted]

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From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 22:01
To: [redacted]; Press
Subject: RE: Cryptocurrency

Hi [redacted]

Please see a further statement from the Commission below in case useful.

Thanks,
[redacted]

Our democracy needs political parties to be funded. Donations can come in many forms, including currency, crypto-currency and services in kind, such as loan of a venue, or printing a pamphlet. Parties can only accept donations from a permissible source. If a donation does not come from a permissible source, or if they cannot identify the donor, they must return it. Parties must make an honest assessment of the value of the donation at the time they receive it, and ensure they know the donor's name, address and contact details to assess their eligibility. Valuation of cryptocurrency should be done in the same way other types of donations are valued. For example, if a party is given property, goods or services free of charge or at a discount, they must value them at the market rate. The same rules on donations apply regardless of how the donation was received.

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[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]
Sent: 30 May 2025 14:52
To: [redacted]@thenational.scot>; Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: RE: Cryptocurrency

Hi [redacted]

The same rules apply to donations received in cryptocurrencies as any other donations. Parties need to collect sufficient information so that they can check the permissibility of the donation, and record and report it according to its value in British Pounds. You can read more about the permissibility of political party donations, including those received in cryptocurrencies in our guidance. We will continue to support parties to ensure their can meet their obligations and comply with the laws around donations.

Thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted]

The Electoral Commission
electoralcommission.org.uk

From: [redacted]@thenational.scot>
Sent: 30 May 2025 11:30
To: Press <press@electoralcommission.org.uk>
Subject: Cryptocurrency

> Some people who received this message don't often get email from [redacted]@thenational.scot. Learn why this is important

Hi [redacted]
Thanks for chatting to me just there, would be good to get any lines from electoral commission re cryptocurrency and Reform.
Kind Regards,
[redacted]

[redacted]
The National and Sunday National
[redacted]

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