

[REDACTED]

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**From:** FOI  
**Sent:** 29 December 2017 12:56  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FOI 199/17 Constitutional Research Council Correspondence Response

**Categories:** Transferred to Skynet  
**SharePointLocationUrl:** [http://skynet/dm/Functions/IM/Requests\\_FOI\\_DPA/Correspondence for Constitutional Research Council](http://skynet/dm/Functions/IM/Requests_FOI_DPA/Correspondence_for_Constitutional_Research_Council)  
**SharePointAbsoluteFileUrl:** [http://skynet/dm/Functions/IM/Requests\\_FOI\\_DPA/Correspondence for Constitutional Research Council/FOI 199\\_17 Constitutional Research Council Correspondence Response Final.msg](http://skynet/dm/Functions/IM/Requests_FOI_DPA/Correspondence_for_Constitutional_Research_Council/FOI_199_17_Constitutional_Research_Council_Correspondence_Response_Final.msg)

Dear [REDACTED]

**Our Ref: FOI 199/17**

Thank you for your email to the Electoral Commission dated **20 December 2017**.

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.

**I would like to request the following information:**

**(1) All correspondence and communications between the Electoral Commission and Richard Cook, the chair of the Constitutional Research Council.**

**(2) All correspondence and communications between the Electoral Commission and representatives of the Constitutional Research Council.**

**I define correspondence and communications as including (but not limited to) the following:**

- **Emails (and their attachments)**
- **Letters**
- **Memos**
- **Invoices**
- **Briefings**
- **Research documents**
- **Invitations**
- **Presentation slides**
- **Notes taken during telephone conversations**
- **Notes taken during meetings**
- **Text messages**

Our response is as follows:

We are unable to confirm or deny as to whether or not we hold any other information in relation to your request.

The Commission is prohibited by legislation from releasing information in relation to donations that may have been given to a registered Northern Ireland party. Section 71E of the Political Parties Elections and Referendum Act 2000 (PPERA) places a duty of confidentiality on the Commission in relation to any information that relates to donations from Northern Ireland recipients or information relating to our function in this area. We consider this information exempt under section 44(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Section 44 exempts from disclosure any information if its disclosure is prohibited by any enactment. As stated, the information requested is specifically prohibited from being released by section 71E of PERA.

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]

**Information, Knowledge and Systems Manager**

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