

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

20 November 2014

Your Ref:

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2014-2277

[request-236796-
xxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx](#)



Sir Stephen House QPM
Chief Constable

FOI Central Processing Unit
173 Pitt Street
Glasgow
G2 4JS

[xxx@xxxxxxxx.xxx.xxxxxx.xx](#)

Dear Mr Alexander

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

SUBJECT: £800,000 Liberal Democrat bill owed to Police after their party conference in Glasgow 2013

I refer to your email dated 30 October 2014 regarding the above which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

I am looking to establish what information exists regarding the outstanding bill of £800,000 which the Liberal Democrat Party still owe to Police Scotland.

The bill stems from the policing of the Liberal Democrat's party conference which took place in Glasgow 2013.

The current Scottish Government have pressed various Lib Dem politicians on the matter but have received an evasive denial type answer on each occasion.

As a citizen of this country it concerns me deeply that certain politicians appear to expect the ordinary taxpayer to pick up the tab.

There is much more information regarding this matter on the internet but i have chosen to include one from the SNP Scottish Government as I am

scotland.police.uk  @PoliceScotland  PoliceScotland

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not a member of that particular party - in an attempt to avoid my enquiry being seen as biased.

<http://www.snp.org/media-centre/news/2014/oct/rennie-must-accept-lib-dems-%C2%A3800000-police-bill>

Can you please provide me with all information regarding this matter.

Your request for information has now been considered and I can advise you that Police Service of Scotland does not hold the information requested by you. In terms of Section 17 of the Act, this letter represents a formal notice that information is not held.

By way of explanation, it has been reported in the media that there is an outstanding invoice of £800,000 for this conference; however, this is factually incorrect. No invoice for the policing costs of the conference was ever generated and the Liberal Democrats did not enter into any arrangement with Police Scotland to provide policing.

To provide more background information, the Liberal Democrat party held their annual national conference in Glasgow between 14th and 18th September 2013. This was the first annual National Party Political conference to be held in Scotland in recent times. The former Strathclyde Police and thereafter Police Scotland, with the participation of the Liberal Democrat Party and the Home Office, followed the methodology set out in the ACPO Policing of Party Conference Guidelines in planning for the conference which resulted in the development of the Conference Security Plan.

On 21st February 2013 Assistant Chief Constable Higgins chaired a meeting with the Liberal Democrat conference organiser, conference chair and representatives from the Home Office where he sought clarity on who would be meeting the policing costs for the 2013 Liberal Democrat national party conference 2013. At that time Mr Higgins set out his clear expectation that Police Scotland should not be financially disadvantaged as a result of a political party holding a private event in Scotland and that he was seeking funding from either the Home Office or the conference organisers themselves for the cost of policing the conference.

The outcome being that the costs to the Liberal Democrat Party of the security measures within the Conference Security Plan were fully met by the Home Office; the costs to Police Scotland were not.

Further, if the conference had taken place in England or Wales 85% of all the policing costs would have been met by the Home Office (Crime and Policing Group) from their Special Grants budget, but as the conference took place in Scotland these grants were not available from the Home Office.

Representation was made directly to the Home Office by Police Scotland and Mr Kenny MacAskill MSP, Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Justice, without success.

The Home Secretary, Rt Hon Theresa May MP, replied to Mr MacAskill confirming that any costs falling to the Liberal Democrat Party as a result of the security measures would be reimbursed by the Home Office. It was her firm view that if Police Scotland required any financial assistance to help with the policing of this event then this should be met by the Scottish Government.

Finally, subsequent communication resulted in the Home Office agreeing to contribute £15,000 to cover the costs of accreditation associated with the event and the remainder of the costs were absorbed by Police Scotland.

I trust that the information available is of assistance and should you require any further assistance concerning this matter please contact me on 0141 435 1217 quoting the reference number given.

If you are not satisfied with the way in which your request has been dealt with, you are entitled in the first instance and within 40 working days of receiving this letter to request a review of the decision made by the Service. Should you wish to do so, contact details are; Police Scotland, FOI Central Processing Unit, 173 Pitt Street, Glasgow, G2 4JS. (Or email xxx@xxxxxxxxx.xxx.xxxxxx.xx)

Once informed of the Review decision, if you are still not satisfied, then you are entitled to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision. Contact details are; 'Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS', telephone 01334 464610.

Yours sincerely

Andrew McCulloch
Information Management
Freedom of Information Officer