



Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

Freedom of Information Team
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24 March 2020

Mark Lavery
request-640161-d010caa4@whatdotheyknow.com

Our Ref: FOI2020/01192

Dear Mr Lavery,

Thank you for your email of 30 January in which you made the following request for information:

“Please supply all correspondence from Matt Warman, MP acting as Minister for Digital and Broadband, sent to public servants holding a public office within NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL including, but not limited to, Liam Hannaway, Chief Executive Officer, from 01 September 2019 - 01 November 2019.”

We have dealt with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). I can confirm that the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) holds information in scope of your request.

There were 2 pieces of correspondence from the Minister for Digital and Broadband, Matt Warman MP, to Newry, Mourne and Down District Council between 1 September 2019 - 1 November 2019, which are available in the attachment. You will note that these letters are similar as the letter sent 7 October was sent prematurely. Please note some information has been withheld under section 40 (personal information) of the Act. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and therefore does not require a public interest test.

I should make you aware that, under the Appropriate Limit and Fees Regulations 2004, public authorities are entitled to aggregate two or more requests for information for the purposes of determining whether the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit. These are where the requests:

- are made by one person, or by different persons who appear to the public authority to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign;
- are received within any period of 60 consecutive working days; and
- relate, to any extent, to the same or similar information.

It is apparent that you are working in concert with another individual, and are conducting a campaign, making a great number of requests for the same (in many instances) or similar information – information concerning engagements between the department and a particular Council in Northern Ireland in this instance. Therefore, the department reserves the right to aggregate your requests and under section 12(4) which would mean that the estimated cost of complying with any of the requests is taken to be the estimated cost of complying with all of them. Whilst the cost limit does not apply in this instance, you should note this when submitting future requests.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team
Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Complaints and comments

As is customary in our replies, I should explain that if you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our response to your request for information, and/or wish to appeal against information being withheld from you, please send full details within two calendar months of the date of this response to: foi@culture.gov.uk. You have the right to ask the Information Commissioner (ICO) to investigate any aspect of your complaint. Please note that the ICO is likely to expect internal complaints procedures to have been exhausted before beginning an investigation.