



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

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By email

request-520939-9bbe1428@whatdotheyknow.com

Our ref: 29/10/fb/788

26 November 2018

Dear Mr Lewis

Re: Linked to case ref 597 – Alcohol Leadership Board minutes

Thank you for your request dated 29 October 2018 addressed to Public Health England (PHE). In accordance with Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). I can confirm that PHE holds the information you have requested.

Your request:

It's mentioned that "minutes have not yet been finalised and have therefore not been included". However, with agendas dating back to July 2016 and some items being 'minutes from the last meeting' (15 January, for instance) - surely this indicates that some minutes have been ratified?

Please find attached the information that falls within the scope of your request.

Please note in accordance with Section 40 – personal information exemption, I have redacted a small amount of third party information from the attached. All names have been substituted with the organisations they represent with the exception of those at Senior Civil Service level 3 or equivalent. I have also redacted some of the information which is not relevant to the request.

Under section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act, public authorities are not obliged to provide information that is intended for future publication. In line with the terms of this exemption in the Freedom of Information Act, we have considered whether;

- maintaining access to this information in a co-ordinated manner to all people at the same time, as well as
- ensuring the quality and integrity of information

In this case, we have concluded that the public interest favours withholding the information. Our view that Section 22 applies to your request is based on the judgement that the public interest will be better served by general publication, when complete. Disclosure now, to a single individual, of incomplete information and therefore potentially misleading information would not be in the public interest.

The request specified is also exempt under section 36(2)(b) (i), (ii) and (c) – *effective conduct of public affairs* of the Act. This is a qualified exemption and is subject to a public interest test. Broadly, this means that the information should only be withheld under the exemption where the public interest in doing so outweighs that in favour of disclosure.

Factors which were considered In favour of release:

- the public interest in transparency and the commitment of PHE to be open and transparent;
- disclosing information to present a full picture to enable wider public scrutiny of decision making

Factors supporting maintaining the exemption:

- PHE officials need a safe place for free and frank exchange of views for the purpose of deliberation
- Premature disclosure may prejudice effective engagement with the full range of stakeholders including public and private sector bodies
- Premature disclosure would detract from PHE's important research work to promote public health and reduce health inequalities

If you have any queries regarding this response, please refer your query in writing in the first instance. If you remain dissatisfied and would like to request an internal review, then please contact us at the address above or by emailing foi@phe.gov.uk

Please note that you have the right to an independent review by the Information Commissioner's Office if a complaint cannot be resolved through the PHE complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner's Office can be contacted by writing to Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information team