



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Department for Business, Energy &
Industrial Strategy
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Mr John Eynon
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FOI2018/00262

15 February 2018

Dear Mr John Eynon,

Thank you for your email of 4 January where you requested the following information:

Dear Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy,

Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.

I am writing to request an internal review of Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's handling of my FOI request 'Financial breakdown of spending by Government on the UK BIM Level 2 and Level 3 programmes, also now known as Digital Built Britain'.

Whilst I accept that some information has been made available, the vagueness of some of the information supplied raises concerns both about public transparency for funding and also accountability to the taxpayer, who is after all funding this work.

In particular, shouldn't there be more detail on the following items?:

1 - £2, 390,000, paid to "other Government depts"/ to whom? for what? there needs to be a little more detail here.

2 - £5, 503, 000 given to the Construction Industry Council? Just like that? How was this procured? Assessed etc? Surely there was some accountability here?

3 - £12m given to Innovate UK? Again just like that? Comments as above, no detail given, nothing about procurement method, value for money and accountability over the arrangements.

A full history of my FOI request and all correspondence is available on the Internet at this address: https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/financial_breakdown_of_spending

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'), you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you require
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

1. The Internal Review is currently being conducted and the findings will be reported separately (FOI2017/26235). However, the requirements of points 2 and 3 above were not immediately clear in the original request and pragmatically the Department have treated them as a new request for information. Accordingly, point 1 will be considered as part of the Internal Review and points 2 and 3 are now considered under this request with the response set out below.

2. As previously reported, the Construction Industry Council (CIC) was provided a grant under Section 8 of the Industrial Development Act 1982. Further details of the Act and the circumstances in which grants can be awarded can be found at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1982/52/part/III>.

3. Grants provided under the Act are reported annually to Parliament and the most recent relevant to the grant can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/industrial-development-act-1982-annual-report-2015-to-2016>

4. The purpose of the grant, delivered with industry support through a major sector umbrella body, was to enable the construction industry to respond to the BIM recommendations set out in the Government Construction Strategy 2011 (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61152/Government-Construction-Strategy_0.pdf) and often referred to as the '2016 mandate'. The Industry's collaborative response under the grant programme included the development of technical standards and guidance, establishment of support networks, conferences and workshops and BIM development work.

5. The CIC Executive and Board (<http://cic.org.uk/about-us/board.php>) were accountable to the Department for the execution of the Grant programme. The management of the programme was via regular meetings with the CIC team and the finances were included as part of the annual audit process of CIC. The worth of the programme was also assessed by industry feedback to the department throughout the project.

6. The programme amounted to an industry driven 'change-programme' and as such it was both visible and participative. The outputs of the programme were widely publicised and made freely available to the construction sector via the main www.bimtaskgroup.org (now retired but linked to the Centre of Digital Built Britain at the University of Cambridge) or sites operated by other related industry bodies including professional institutes and standards organisations e.g. BSI <https://www.bsigroup.com/>. The nature of the work, people involved in the programme, interaction opportunities and outputs were widely disseminated including via industry bodies, conference presentations, press interaction and the 79 editions of the CIC BIM Task Group Newsletters.

7. The CIC programme was closed in 2016 at completion of its task.

8. In the 2016 Budget, the Government announced a new 3-year programme known as 'Digital Built Britain' (DBB, aka BIM L3) and made £15m available to BEIS to take forward the programme. The purpose of this programme is primarily aimed at developing a framework

within which new digital and data applications for construction and the built environment can be developed. For the purposes of continuity and cohesion, the DBB maintained a programme to continue supporting aspects of L2 BIM. Innovate UK - an Executive, Non-departmental body of this Department <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/innovate-uk> - acted as the Departmental delivery vehicle and was not subject to our procurement. Innovate UK handled the procurement of personnel and services to deliver the DBB project and were identified in the original response as the point of record for those activities.

9. Innovate UK are subject to Public Sector rules in terms of their procurement and requirements to achieve 'value for money' for the tax payer and in common with all public bodies are monitored for compliance.

Appeals procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original request and should be addressed to the Information Rights Unit:

Information Rights Unit
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET
Email: FOI.Requests@beis.gov.uk

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Business Sectors Team