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Date

4 September 2014

Paul Lythgoe
(sent by email)

Ref: IR 420

Dear Mr Lythgoe,

Thank you for your e-mail of 26 August asking for a review of the Department's Freedom of Information response sent on that day. This response was sent in reply to your original request:

I would like to make an FOI request to view the Ministerial Diary of Iain Duncan Smith for the month of August 2014, and in particular to see listed all events whether public or private where he made a speech or contributed to debate. So, for example, on the 11th of August the department published a speech that stated it was to be delivered in London by Iain Duncan Smith. For this event and similar I would like to know where Iain Duncan Smith was, and what organisation or event he was attending

Your review states:

Your office refused my request on the grounds that you maintained a quarterly publication of ministerial speeches and that it was in the public interest to maintain this publication schedule. My contention is that it is not in the public interest to release a speech to be made by the minister and then withhold for 3 months any information regarding that speech, where it was made and to whom. Given the publicity and the publication in virtually all UK media on the 11th of August for a speech to be made on the 12th of August by the Minister it must be in the public interest for information as to where that speech was made and to whom to be published in the same timely way as the contents of the speech.

My request for information on his private and public diary appointments was to ascertain where this speech was made. I am happy that you limit your response to the Diary events of the 12th August where this specific speech was supposed to be made. In doing so one would hope to avoid invading the ministers of the crown privilege of privacy. If the speech was made in private and not at a public event it would be sufficient for you to confirm this

I am of a senior grade to the person who dealt with your request previously, and can confirm that I have carried out an internal review. I confirm that I have considered your

request afresh. In conducting my review, I have discussed the original reply, the handling and the decisions on what can be provided with the officer who drafted it.

I have now concluded my review and uphold the decision to withhold the specific information requested in line with the explanations given in the original response.

However, your review focusses specifically on a speech given on 12 August 2014 and I can confirm that this was delivered at an event held in London and hosted by the Institute of Directors.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely

Lynne Pearson

Lynne Pearson
Business Support Manager
DWP Private Office

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF

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