



Information Rights Team
Post Office Limited
Ground Floor
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London EC2Y 9AQ
033 3665 3951

Our reference: FOI201709111116

Ms Erica Smith
request-427838-f9176589@whatdotheyknow.com

20 September 2017

Dear Ms Smith,

Freedom of Information Request - FOI201709111116

I am writing in response to your email received by Post Office Limited ("**Post Office**") on 11 September 2017, which I am dealing with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("**FOIA**").

In your email, you have requested the following information on the St Leonards on Sea consultation:

- Branch Advert (Brief for business partner/franchisee)
- Consultation documentation/outcomes and comments received
- Citizens Advice comments
- Correspondence with Hastings Council
- Equality/Economic Impact Assessment

I can confirm that Post Office does hold the information you have requested. Please find attached copies of the information. The St Leonards on Sea Consultations Submissions is a report of the output of our consultation platform of comments received during the consultation period which ran from 28 June 2017 to 09 August 2017. We received 180 response the consultation. A further 9 were received after consultation ended giving a total of 189 responses. In addition, 492 campaign letters were received within the consultation period and a petition containing 4912 signatures following the closure of the consultation.

This report records the responses that were sent to us including individual responses, campaign letters and petitions etc. during the consultation period. I have attached the comments separately that were received after the consultation closed. In viewing the report, it is important to bear in mind that petitions and campaign letters are recoded as one entry, as part of normal practice. In reviewing all of the feedback received during the consultation period, the decision-making process ensures that every piece of feedback is fully considered.

Although Post Office Limited does not conduct a formal Equality Impact Assessment, we do conduct a rigorous assessment of many factors before proposing any change to the Post Office network. This includes thoroughly documenting and considering accessibility impacts.

Post Office believes that some of the information contained within the attached documents is the personal data relating to a third party. In this respect, we rely on the exemption contained in section 40(2) of the FOIA, concerning personal information.

Personal Information

We believe the disclosure of this information would contravene data protection principles – disclosing such information would be likely to breach the principle of fair and lawful processing. As such we have released the copies but redacted information we believe identifies third parties.

Public Interest

Post Office acknowledges the general public interest in transparency and accountability. However, disclosure of personal information would not serve the interests of the public as it does not relate to the provisions of public services or decisions directly affecting the public.

In respect of the Equality Impact Assessment we have disclosed the document but redacted customer sessions, as this detail engages section 43(2) of the Act concerning likely prejudice to Commercial Interests.

Commercial Interests

It may help to explain that Post Office operates in a number of competitive markets and within our overall Post Office branch network the performance of individual branches will depend on a number of factors which can include population demographics, type and location of nearby retail competitors, number of customer visits to the branch, the types of transactions typically undertaken by customers and the number and location of other Post Office branches in the vicinity.

Post Office's commercial interests would be prejudiced by the disclosure of Branch information which could place Post Office at a disadvantage when seeking to attract or negotiate with future potential franchise partners or services. We consider that the release of this information would not significantly serve the interests of the public as it could have a detrimental impact on the ability of Post Office to provide a sustainable post office service going forward.

Public Interest

As information has been exempted under section 43(2) of the Act, a public interest test applies. This involves weighing the balance of public interest in maintaining the exemption or releasing the information. Post Office understands that there is public interest in promoting the transparency and understanding of matters which are of interest to the public. However, there is also strong public interest in ensuring that Post Office are able to operate in a fair marketplace and are not commercially damaged or disadvantaged by the release of the commercial information you have requested

I hope the information I have provided on this occasion is useful, however if you are dissatisfied with the handling of this response, you do have a right to request an internal review. You can do this by writing to the address below stating your reasons for your internal review request.

Information Rights Manager
Post Office Limited
Information Rights Team
Ground Floor
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London
EC2Y 9AQ

information.rights@postoffice.co.uk

If, having requested an internal review by Post Office, you are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 01625 545 700
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Yours sincerely



Kerry Moodie
Information Rights Team
information.rights@postoffice.co.uk
[@postofficenews](http://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/access-information)

Enclosures: CitA feedback for St Leonards on Sea
Accessibility Information
Correspondence Received after Consultation
Correspondence with Hastings Council
Petition
St Leonards On Sea Consultation Submissions
St Leonards On Sea Proposal Letter
St Leonards on Sea Branch Adverts
St Leonards On Sea Proposal Poster