

Mr Mathew Kitson

020 7270 5000  
foirequests@hmtreasury.gov.uk  
www.gov.uk/hm-treasury

8 February 2021

Ref: FOI2020/26660

Dear Mr Kitson

## Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your enquiry of 2 July 2020, which we have considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOI Act).

You asked for the following information:

*"I would like to know the amount of people, who earn over £50000 per year, that are receiving support through the CJRS (job retention scheme)"*

We wrote to you on 30 July 2020 to explain that we held information in scope of your request and by virtue of section 10(3) of the FOI Act, we needed to give further consideration to the public interest with regard to the information under section 35(1)(a), which relates to the formulation or development of Government policy.

I would like to apologise for the delay it has taken to respond. We have now completed our assessment and this letter sets out our conclusions on your request.

We consider that the information that we have identified, which is the most up-to-date at the time of your request, engages the exemption at section 35(1)(a) (formulation or development of Government policy) under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This is a qualified exemption and we are required to balance the public interest between disclosure and non-disclosure.

In relation to the release of this information, we recognise that there is an inherent public interest in transparency and accountability of public authorities. We also recognise the broad public interest in furthering public understanding of the issues which public authorities deal with. There is a clear public interest in the work of Government departments being transparent and open to scrutiny to increase diligence.

Balanced against this, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is subject to ongoing policy development and as such requires officials to propose, test evaluate and refine different options. The information that you have requested informs this work and its release could undermine the ability of officials to consider and refine the policy in a 'safe space'.

I note that you have requested an internal review into this request. We will respond separately under our reference IR2020/33135.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us. Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Information Rights Unit

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