



Government Legal Department

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Our reference: FOI/88/20/ROBERTS

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request for Internal Review

Thank you for your email of 17 September 2020 requesting an internal review of the response to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act') of 17 July 2020.

Please accept my apologies for the length of time it has taken to respond.

I am a member of the Senior Civil Service and a Deputy Director in the Government Legal Department ('GLD') who has not had any previous involvement with this matter. I have carried out a review and I am now in a position to respond.

You originally asked whether GLD provided a legal service to the PHSO (the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman) and, if so, for details of any contractual arrangement that exists between GLD and the PHSO.

GLD's response dated 17 September 2020 confirmed that it does not hold this information as it has no active cases for the current financial year.

You have requested a review of this response on the basis that it appears that GLD considers having no active cases for the current financial year to mean that no contractual arrangement exists, although it does provide legal services. In light of which, you have also asked on what terms legal services are provided by GLD.

Having reviewed this matter I can confirm that the previous response was correct. Although, GLD has provided legal services to the PHSO in the past, it does not have a contractual relationship with the PHSO.

In response to your question about the terms on which legal services are provided by GLD, I can confirm that if the PHSO instructed GLD in future, GLD's standard litigation terms and conditions would apply, a copy of which is enclosed.

If you are not content with the outcome of my internal review you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted on 0303 123 1113, or at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

Caroline Harold
Head of Bona Vacantia Division

