



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

Freedom of Information Team  
Department of Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0EU

[www.gov.uk/dhsc](http://www.gov.uk/dhsc)

Mr Anthony Chambers

By email to: [request-1215285-237f5a3b@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-1215285-237f5a3b@whatdotheyknow.com)

14 January 2025

Dear Mr Chambers,

### **Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1557422**

Thank you for your request dated 13 December to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), a copy of which can be found in the accompanying annex.

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

For clarity, we understand your request to be about expenditure on legal fees relating to the Thirlwall Inquiry. The Thirlwall Inquiry, looking at the events in the Countess of Chester Hospital, in relation to neonatal nurse Lucy Letby, commenced in September 2023.

DHSC holds some information relevant to your request. However, as the information held by DHSC is in the public domain, we will, under section 21 of the FOIA (information accessible to the applicant by other means), refer you to the published source.

Information relating to legal costs paid by the Thirlwall Inquiry, which covers both the Inquiry's legal costs, as well as costs paid to legal firms in accordance with the Notice of Determination issued pursuant to Section 40 of the Inquiries Act 2005, is already in the public domain.

The Thirlwall Inquiry, which is sponsored by DHSC, publishes its financial accounts at the following link: [Documents | The Thirlwall Inquiry](#). The last update was 10 December 2024.

DHSC is also a core participant to the Thirlwall Inquiry and is legally represented by the Government Legal Department. However, DHSC does not hold information on this legal spend, as these costs are not identifiable in DHSC's departmental accounts. You may wish to submit your request for this element of DHSC's legal spend to the Government Legal Department. Its contact email address is: [foi@governmentlegal.gov.uk](mailto:foi@governmentlegal.gov.uk)

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you can request we undertake an internal review. It would be helpful, if doing so, to be explicit about which areas of the Freedom of Information response you are dissatisfied. Complaints to us should be sent to [freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk) or to the address at the top of this letter and be submitted within 40 working days of the date of this letter.

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

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have already complained to us about our original response and received our response to your complaint and, if applicable, our internal review decision. You should raise your concerns with the ICO within six weeks of your last substantive contact with us.

Guidance on contacting the ICO can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us>, and information about making a complaint can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint>.

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team  
[freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk)

## Annex

From: Anthony chambers <request-1215285-237f5a3b@whatdotheyknow.com>  
Sent: Friday, December 13, 2024 4:02 PM  
To: FreedomofInformation <freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk>  
Subject: Freedom of Information request - Lucy letby public inquiry

Dear Department of Health and Social Care,

as a freedom of information request disclose how much public money your organisation has so far spent on legal fees specific to the Lucy Letby public inquiry

Yours faithfully,

Mr Anthony chambers