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Peter Moore
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Our Reference: 202000103381

12 November 2020

Dear Peter Moore,

REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002 (FOISA)

Thank you for your request dated 27/10/2020 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

Your request

Please provide details of any and all meetings (face-to-face, video conference or otherwise) between Richard Lochhead and/or their officials, and Dr Paul Monaghan (former MP for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross) during the period 2014 to 2018 inclusive.

Response to your request

Details of all Ministerial engagements are proactively published by the Scottish Government. This is a formal notice under section 25 (1) as the Scottish Government has already proactively published the information you have requested.

The transparency data for 2016 to 2018 can be accessed via this weblink:
<https://www.gov.scot/collections/ministerial-engagements-travel-and-gifts/>

The transparency data prior to 2016 can be accessed via this weblink:
<https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20170401123936/http://www.gov.scot/About/People/14/Engagements/MinisterialEngagements>



This exemption is subject to the 'public interest test'. Therefore, taking account of all the circumstances of this case, we have considered if the public interest in disclosing the information outweighs the public interest in applying the exemption. We have found that, on balance, the public interest lies in favour of upholding the exemption. We recognise that there is some public interest in release because there is public interest in the work carried out by Scottish Government Ministers. However, there is a greater public interest in the use of public resources. Since providing this information would create a duplication in work, we have determined this would not being a responsible use of public resources and therefore not in the public interest.

Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your FOI request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by writing to Director for Communications, Ministerial Support and Facilities, 3W, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG or email DirectorCMSF@gov.scot.

Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made within 40 working days from the date when you received this letter. We will complete the review and tell you the result, within 20 working days from the date when we receive your review request.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. More detailed information on your appeal rights is available on the Commissioner's website at:

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.asp>

Yours sincerely

Joanna Bowman
Ministerial Private Offices

