



HM Treasury

Information Rights Unit
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Mr Jonathan Shepperd

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8 July 2019

Dear Mr Shepperd

Ref: FOI2019/09056

Freedom of Information Act 2000: Meetings with the horticultural sector

Thank you for your enquiry of 16 June 2019, which we have considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOI Act).

You asked for the following information:

"Over the last 12 months, what meetings, if any, did Ministers hold with representatives of the Horticulture Sector and what topics were discussed?"

Information regarding HM Treasury Ministers' meetings, hospitality, gifts and overseas travel are routinely published online. The information you have requested up to 31 March 2019 is already in the public domain. Under section 21 of the FOI Act, public authorities are not obliged to re-issue information where it is already publicly accessible. To be helpful, a link to the information is provided below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>

Information regarding HM Treasury Ministers' meetings from 1 April 2019 onwards has not yet been published. The exemption at section 22(1) of the FOI Act - information intended for future publication - is engaged in relation to this part of your request because the information is intended for publication at a future date. Section 22 is a qualified exemption, requiring us to consider the public interest balance in disclosure.

There is a public interest in publishing data on HM Treasury Ministers' meetings in order to help increase transparency and accountability. In recognition of this public interest, the Treasury is working to ensure the data is published as quickly as possible.

However, it is recognised that there is a public interest for the Treasury to determine its own publication timetable and have the space required to prepare and quality assure the information requested. There is a process for preparation and verification of the data prior to its publication. Failure to follow this process could lead to inaccurate data being published, which would not be in the public interest.

Having set out our public interest balance considerations, we consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the

information as this stage. The information from 1 April 2019 onwards will be published in due course at the link above.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of the letters 'IRU' in a stylized, cursive-like font.

Information Rights Unit

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Email: foirequests@hmtreasury.gov.uk

It would assist our review if you set out which aspects of the reply concern you and why you are dissatisfied.

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