



Information Policy & Compliance

bbc.co.uk/foi bbc.co.uk/privacy

Ms Christine Morrow

via e-mail: request-582286-f26ef9d5@whatdotheyknow.com

5 July 2019

Dear Ms Morrow,

Freedom of Information Request - RFI20190976

Thank you for your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) dated 10 June 2019, seeking the following information:

'Please would you supply the names and numbers of MO's, MEP's, Lords who receive free TV Licences.

Please also supply the numbers of free licences currently provided to those aged 75 and over.'

We can confirm that MP's, MEP's, and Members of the House of Lords, are not entitled to a free TV licence.

The BBC's Annual Report & Accounts for 17/18, state there are 4,455,000 over 75 licences.

The Government decided to stop funding free licences for all over 75s, and Parliament gave the BBC the clear responsibility to decide the future policy. We've reached the fairest decision we can so we protect the poorest pensioners while ensuring everyone will continue to receive the best programmes and services that the BBC can provide.

Copying the current scheme was ultimately untenable. It would have cost £745 million a year by 2021/22 - and risen to over one billion by the end of the next decade. £745 million a year is equivalent to around a fifth of the BBC's spending on services. The scale of the current concession and its quickly rising cost would have meant profoundly damaging closures of major services that we know audiences - and older audiences in particular - love, use, and value every day.

190,000 people took part in our consultation, there was strong support for the BBC and there was little public appetite for us to close particular services because people recognised the

important role of the BBC. We want to work with organisations representing older age groups and charities to help raise the visibility of Pension Credit as a way of claiming a free TV licence. We'll also introduce a new payment plan for pensioners aged 75 or over who are eligible to pay including smaller fortnightly instalments

Finally, you may be interested to know that the BBC has published the following information in relation to changes to the over 75 TV licence scheme:

<https://www.bbc.com/aboutthebbc/reports/consultation/age-related-tv-licence-policy>

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied that we have complied with the Act in responding to your request, you have the right to an internal review by a BBC senior manager or legal adviser. Please contact us at the address above, explaining what you would like us to review and including your reference number. If you are not satisfied with the internal review, you can appeal to the Information Commissioner. The contact details are: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, Tel: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or 01625 545 745 (national rate) or see <http://www.ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Information Rights

