



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

By email to: [REDACTED]

16 January 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1350473

Thank you for your request dated 28 July 2021 to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), a copy of which can be found in the accompanying annex.

This was a follow up to your request of 28 June 2021, to which we responded on 26 July 2021 with a section 12 (cost limits) response (our ref: FOI-1341027).

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), and I apologise for the length of time it has taken to respond.

DHSC holds information in scope of your request, which is contained in the eight PDF documents in the zip folder attached.

This information has been redacted to take out the names and contact details of officials/Palantir staff below senior level, as we consider this information to be exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the FOIA. Section 40(2) provides for the protection of personal information which would not otherwise be available in the public domain, as disclosing this information would contravene data protection principles.

Some information has also been redacted from one of the emails in Document 5 ("*Palantir - follow-up to SoS meeting yesterday*") as we consider it to be exempt under section 43 (commercial interests) of the FOIA.

Section 43 of the FOIA exempts from the general duty to release information which would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any entity, including the public authority holding the information.

We consider that release of this information will lead to the disclosure of DHSC's strategic business plans and development plans within the sector, which would be likely to prejudice DHSC as it would reveal its position on the matters being discussed, and impact its ability to negotiate with third parties. Some information is also being withheld as it relates to a third party's technical and commercial approach, and its disclosure would prejudice certain aspects of its commercial interests (in respect of intellectual property) if it were to enter the public domain.

Section 43 is a qualified exemption and, as such, we are required to assess the public interest in withholding this information against that of its release. We recognise a general

public interest in releasing information that relates to DHSC's strategic plans. However, we also take into account the fact that this information is commercially sensitive, the release of which would harm the commercial interests of those involved. Therefore, we take the view that, in this case, the public interest lies in ensuring that this information is not disclosed.

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to appeal by asking for an internal review. This should be sent to freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk or to the address at the top of this letter and be submitted within two months 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 appealed our original response and received our internal review decision. You should raise your concerns with the ICO within three months of your last meaningful 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

Annex

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: 28 July 2021 11:56
To: FreedomofInformation <freedomofinformation@dhsc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: FOI-1341027

RE: FOI-1341027

Thankyou for your response, and for your recommendation for how to refine the above request.

I am happy to change "officials" to include only the Secretary of State's private office.

So the request (as refined) would read:

The information I seek is as follows:

- All correspondence between Matt Hancock, the Secretary of State's private office and representatives of Palantir with regard to Palantir
- This should include, but not be restricted to, emails sent and received from both official and personal email addresses, text messages, WhatsApp or other messaging service messages or group chats and instant messages.
- Please provide the above information from September 1 to October 15 2020.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]