



Cabinet Office

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ALEX HEASMAN-BAILEY

By email: request-542851-f0510eab@whatdotheyknow.com

FOI Reference: FOI327433

06/02/2019

Dear ALEX HEASMAN-BAILEY

I refer to your request where you asked:

'Dear Cabinet Office,

The Rt Hon. Nick Clegg has been able to claim Public Duty Cost allowance as former Deputy Prime Minister since 9 May 2015 and will be able to claim this allowance for five years.

Since October 2018, Nick Clegg has been appointed 'Vice President for Global Affairs and Communications at Facebook'. In addition, as part of his new employment with Facebook, he is reported to take long-term residence in Silicon Valley, California.

Therefore, I request the following information:

1) Has Nick Clegg claimed any Public Duty Cost Allowance; since his announced employment with Facebook; from October 2018 onwards (up to and including 8th January 2019)?

If claims have been made:

2) How much has been claimed by Nick Clegg since October 2018?

Furthermore, the Cabinet Office stated in a response to a FOI request on the 26/10/2017:

"The Public Duty Cost Allowance was extended to the former Deputy Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. Nick Clegg, for the period of five years from 9 May 2015, to be reviewed

annually.” (FOI Ref: FOI325217)

Therefore, I also request the following information:

3) Has an annual review of the extension of the Public Duty Cost Allowance to former Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg taken place since his announced employment at Facebook?

If a review has taken place:

4) A copy of the annual review for this extension (either in full or partially redacted for public use.)

5) Has the review considered his Facebook employment and his probable significantly high salary as a factor in this review?

If a review has not yet taken place:

6) The date of which a review for this extension will next occur.

7) Whether the cabinet office will consider his Facebook employment in a review of his Public Duty Cost Allowance.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Heasman-Bailey'

I am writing to advise you that following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that the information you requested is held by the Cabinet Office.

Former PMs contribute to public life in many ways after they leave office. As well as undertaking charitable works and speaking engagements, they handle high volumes of correspondence from members of the public and are engaged regularly on matters of government policy in a wide variety of fora. The PDCA is a simple reimbursement of office expenses designed to offset the costs arising from these unpaid public duties.

The maximum amount payable is £115,000 and this is set with reference to the annual Parliamentary Staffing Allowance allocated to Members of Parliament under the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) allowances regime.

Published guidance on the PDCA, Assistance to Former Prime Ministers, sets out the basis for the reimbursement of bills and staff costs. As the financial controls applied to PDCA claims are the same as for other allowances and expenses, there is no specific supplementary guidance relating to PDCA payments used by internal Cabinet Office staff. Cabinet Office Finance review the claims (which are generally submitted via an invoice) and if, on the basis of the information provided, they are satisfied that the claim meets the terms of the allowance, a payment is made. If questions arise these are directed to the relevant Office and payment may be withheld until a satisfactory response has been received.

As with any other Cabinet Office financial transaction, supporting documentation is subject to inspection by the Government Internal Audit Agency and the National Audit Office. The amount paid to each former Prime Minister is disclosed each year in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts.

On 19 October 2018, The Rt Hon. Nick Clegg notified the Cabinet Office of his intention to relinquish his Public Duty Costs Allowance, confirming his decision to take up a full time role in the commercial sector and the closure of his private office from end of December. The Rt Hon. Nick Clegg confirmed that no further claim will be made for expenses incurred after December 2018

Information you have requested is being withheld as it is exempt under section 22(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 22(1) protects information intended for future publication. Section 22 is a qualified exemption and I have considered whether the balance of the public interest favours maintaining the exemption in section 22(1) or disclosing the information.

The specific amounts claimed by the Rt Hon. Nick Clegg's office and paid by the Cabinet Office in accordance with PDCA are published in the Annual Reports and Accounts each year and will be published in due course.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request or wish to request an internal review, you should write to:

Eirian Walsh Atkins
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AS

email: foi-team@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

You should note that the Cabinet Office will not normally accept an application for internal review if it is received more than two months after the date that the reply was issued.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by Cabinet Office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. B. K.', is written over a faint, light blue circular stamp or watermark.

FOI Team
Cabinet Office