



Foreign &
Commonwealth
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Frankie Bontemps
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03 July 2020

Dear Frankie Bontemps

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: FOI2020/01870

Thank you for your email of 28th February asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

I am requesting a detailed account of how the 40 million pounds allocated to the Chagossian community has been spent and allocated since the announcement in 2016. I am requesting a detailed account of both money spent, recipients and plans for future spending. Also I would like to know the rationale behind the spending, and the extent to which the FCO feels this money is serving the needs of the Chagossians.

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested. I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold some information relevant to your request.

The FCO is not able to provide a total figure for how much of the approximately £40m Support Package has been spent and allocated since the package was announced in 2016. This is partly because DFID is responsible for Support Package expenditure in Mauritius as it is Official Development Assistance eligible.

Since 2016 the FCO alone has spent 542,820.27 of the Support Package. Of this amount 527,799.27 was for Chagossian Heritage Visits to BIOT. The remaining £15,021 was spent in the UK on the following:

- Payment to Crawley Borough Council for needs analysis work related to the support package
- Interpretation services for meeting representatives of the Chagossian community at Crawley Community Centre

- Scoping visit to BIOT in preparation for next heritage Visits (flights and subsistence)

While this expenditure took place in the UK, it is not solely UK resident Chagossians who will benefit from it as to date, most FCO Support Package expenditure is not country specific.

You should contact DFID for details of Support Package expenditure in Mauritius.

The FCO continues to develop projects for disbursement of Support Package funds in both UK and Seychelles in the areas for which it is intended.

The rationale behind the spending is contained in a [BIOT WMS from November 2016](#).

We previously considered your request under section 27 (international relations). However upon further review of the material found in scope of your request, we now consider section 12 to apply to some parts of your request.

In regards to the second and third parts of your request, section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. The limit has been specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. For central government the appropriate limit is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 3 ½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it. Your request as presently formulated is widely-framed and I estimate that it will take more than 3 ½ working days to locate, retrieve and extract this information. In these circumstances we are not obliged under the Act to comply with your request. You may therefore wish to refine your request to narrow its scope to bring it within the appropriate limit. We suggest that you refine the time frame for these parts of your request to a period of one month.

Please note that any new request will be given a separate reference number and we will then consider whether we can provide the information requested within the appropriate cost limit. This would of course be subject to the consideration of whether any of the other exemptions under the FOI Act apply.

Once an FOI request is answered, it is considered to be in the public domain. To promote transparency, we may now publish the response and any material released on gov.uk in the [FOI releases](#) section. All personal information in the letter will be removed before publishing.

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If you would like a review of our decision, or if you wish to make a complaint, please write to the Central FOI Unit, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Room WH2.177, King Charles Street, London, SW1A 2AH. E-mail: foi-dpa.pmcs@fco.gov.uk. You have 40 working days to do so from the date of this letter.

You can apply directly to the Information Commissioner. However, the Information Commissioner will not normally make a decision unless you have first exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the FCO. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

Overseas Territories Directorate



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