



Department of Health & Social Care

Freedom of Information Team
Department of Health and Social Care
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London
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Mr Paul Barnes
request-524233-45d7ba1c@whatdotheyknow.com

1 November 2018

Dear Mr Barnes,

Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1151161

Thank you for your request dated 4 October in which you asked the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC):

"Subject: Freedom of Information request - The Cost of the UK Delegation to the WHO FCTC Conference in Geneva

*Dear Department of Health and Social Care,
The United Kingdom, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) sent a delegation to Geneva to attend the latest conference of the Parties (COP8).*

I would like to know:

- 1 - What was the cost of sending representatives to COP8*
- 2 - What information was received by the UK Delegation specifically from the WHO and FCTC Secretariat prior to the conference - including electronic and physical correspondence.*
- 3 - Whether the UK delegation voted to exclude the press and public from the conference*
- 4 - Whether the UK delegation voted to restrict the live-streaming of the conference"*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Question 1 - What was the cost of sending representatives to COP8?

There were four members of the UK delegation in total, one of whom was based in Geneva. The costs incurred by the three non-Geneva based members of the UK delegation in attending the Eighth Conference of the Parties (COP8) was £2,233.88

Question 2 - What information was received by the UK Delegation specifically from the WHO and FCTC Secretariat prior to the conference - including electronic and physical correspondence?

Please find enclosed the papers to your request around administrative papers for the UK delegation to attend CoP8. Page 36 refers to the '2018 Global Progress Report' which can be found at: http://www.who.int/entity/fctc/reporting/WHO-FCTC-2018_global_progress_report.pdf?ua=1

Some of the information has been withheld under S27(1) of FOIA. Information is exempt under section 27(1) (a-b) if disclosure would or likely to prejudice relations between the United Kingdom and any other State or relations between the United Kingdom and any international organisation or international court.

Section 27(1) is a qualified exemption, and we are required to assess whether the balance of public interest favours disclosing or withholding the information.

DHSC recognises that there is a strong public interest in information being made as freely available as possible, allowing the general public to understand decisions made by public authorities which affect their lives.

The Department has considered the public interest in maintaining that the exemption outweighs the public interest in its disclosure. In other words, the harm likely to be caused to the UK relations with the World Health Organisation and with other countries. It has been concluded that release of the information in scope would harm such activities.

In addition, please note that some of this information has been redacted under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act which provides for the protection of personal information. Section 40 prohibits a public body from disclosing personally identifiable information as doing so would contravene data protection principles.

3 - Whether the UK delegation voted to exclude the press and public from the conference.
There was no vote on the matter.

4 - Whether the UK delegation voted to restrict the live-streaming of the conference
There was no vote on this matter. Outside the scope of the Act and at our discretion you may find the following information useful. All the finalised decisions from the meetings and papers at CoP8 are available publicly at: <http://www.who.int/fctc/cop/sessions/cop8/en/>

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 submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the address at the top of this letter, or the email address at the end of this letter.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may complain directly to the Information Commissioner (ICO) who may decide to investigate your concerns. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have already appealed our original response, and received our internal review response. The ICO will not usually investigate concerns where there has been an undue delay in bringing it to their attention. You should raise your concerns with them within three months of your last meaningful contact with us.

The ICO can be contacted at:

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

<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

Yours sincerely,

Edward Franklyn

Freedom of Information Officer

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