



Cathy Fox

(by email only: request-208565-30e8d82e@whatdotheyknow.com)

2nd December 2015

Dear **Ms Fox**,

Cabinet Office Internal Review Reference: **319454**
(Original Case Reference: **FOI 319454**)

REVIEW OF REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Thank you for your email of 15 November 2015 in which you asked for an internal review of our response to your request for information of 25 April 2014. In your original request you asked:

1. When a person receives an "honour" what vetting procedure does that person go through?
2. What body carries out the vetting?
3. What are all the circumstances when vetting of any sort is carried out?
4. What other types of vetting are there in other circumstances? Eg becoming an MP, Cabinet Minister, police officer, ACPO officer.
5. With respect to Sir Cyril Smith and Sir Jimmy Savile please release the vetting results on those individuals.

I have carefully reviewed the handling of your request and I am satisfied that with regard to points 1-4 above you were given the correct advice that the information you were seeking was already in the public domain and where you might access this information.

With regard to point 5, our original response should have made clear that the Cabinet Office holds no information within the scope of your request about Jimmy Savile.

As for the information in scope held by the Cabinet Office on Cyril Smith, I can confirm that the exemptions cited in our letter of 6 March 2015, namely sections 40(2) in combination with s40 (3)(a)(i) of the Freedom of Information Act were properly applied.

I am also of the view that s23 and 24 of the Act were properly applied. I believe that the balance of the public interest was fully considered for the reasons set out in our letter of 6 March 2015. I have therefore concluded that I should uphold the decision given in our letter.

I have also considered the points you make about how your case was handled, particularly the delay in replying and your unhappiness about what you regard as an insufficient apology. First, I accept that there was an unacceptable delay in replying to your initial request for information. This was due to the Cabinet Office holding many paper files and electronic files that might potentially contain information within the scope of your request. We therefore had to review a great deal of information and needed to be thorough. This took longer than we would have wanted and was responsible for the delay. We did try to keep you advised on our progress and as you acknowledge sent you four letters extending the deadline by which we had to reply to you. Nevertheless, I accept that we should have replied earlier and I apologise for not doing so.

You raised a number of additional points. I can confirm that our letter of 6 March 2015 was signed by a member of the Cabinet Office FOI team. Finally, you also asked if this office had received any message from the WhatDoTheyKnow website advising that the request had been closed down. I can confirm that we have no record of receiving such a message.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request for information you, have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'HE' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Helen Ewen
Deputy Director, Cabinet Office