



Date
4 February 2025

Post Office
100 Wood Street
London EC2V 9ER

Your Ref:

Classification:
Public

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information Request – FOI2024/01486

We are writing in response to your email received by Post Office Limited (**"Post Office"**) on 11 November, which has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (**"FOIA"**).

In your email, you have requested the information shown verbatim in bold below:

"Could we try a 6 month period & only material related to Network Transformation, please?

So, 01/06/2017 & 01/12/2017.

Also is there a way of paying for excess time spent?

This would save putting multiple requests in over time to cover the period of interest.

[Original request: Please can you provide any communications (emails, letters, etc) internal & external that you have copies off, relating to (or sent to) Ffrith post office, Victoria Road West, Prestatyn, LL19 7YF between 01/06/2017 & 01/06/2018?]"

We can confirm that Post Office does hold the information you have requested.

We ran a search for correspondence relating to Network Transformation at Ffrith Post Office, Prestatyn between 1 June 2017 and 1 December 2017 which resulted in 629 hits. During this time period, the information directly related to the changeover of postmasters and postmasters' applications. We have, therefore,

determined that the information should be withheld as it falls under both the exemptions in section 43(2) of the FOIA, which relates to information which would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it); and sections 40(2) and 40(3A) of the FOIA as the information constitutes personal data relating to other persons.

Sections 40(2) and 40(3A) exempt personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would breach any of the data protection principles in Article 5(1) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation ("**GDPR**"). We consider that disclosure of this information is likely to breach the first data protection principle, which provides that personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly, and in a transparent manner. Disclosure would not constitute 'fair' processing of the personal data as postmasters involved would not reasonably expect their names and highly personal information to be disclosed in relation to information requests.

In applying the exemption in section 43(2), we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure. We recognise that there is a public interest in the disclosure of information concerning details of network transformation as this helps promote transparency in Post Office business and the running of Post Office branches.

However, there is a strong public interest in withholding the information as disclosure of correspondence relating directly to processes surrounding postmaster applications may prejudice the commercial interests of both Post Office and third parties if applicants were under the impression that their application process was subject to disclosure. Disclosing internal processes and personal information in this manner would affect the business' ability to operate fairly and privately between ourselves and future potential postmasters. This would harm Post Office's ability to maintain their current network, whilst reducing the organisations' overall commercial effectiveness.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of this response, you do have a right to request an internal review. You can do this by writing to the address above within 40 working days of receipt of this response stating your reasons for your internal review request or alternatively, by emailing information.rights@postoffice.co.uk.

If, having requested an internal review by Post Office, you are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

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

Telephone: 0303 123 1113
www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Team
information.rights@postoffice.co.uk
<https://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/en/governance/access-to-information/access-to-information/>

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