

HOUSE OF LORDS
APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION
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Ref: HOLAC FOI 2022/12
20 May 2022

By email: <REDACTED>

Dear <REDACTED>,

Ref: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

We are writing to advise you that following a search of our paper and electronic records, we have established that the information you requested is held by the House of Lords Appointments Commission.

The information you have requested is being withheld as it is exempt under section 22(1) of the Freedom of Information Act ("the Act"). Section 22(1) protects information intended for future publication. Section 22(1) 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.

We recognise the public interest in demonstrating transparency by releasing information to the public. We also appreciate that this increases public trust and that the public benefits from being kept informed about matters affecting them.

However, there is a public interest in cost effectiveness in how the Commission publishes information. Section 22(1) acknowledges that public authorities must have freedom to be able to determine their own publication timetables. This allows them to deal with the necessary preparation, administration and context of publication. It is a part of the effective conduct of public affairs that the general publication of information is a conveniently planned and managed activity within the reasonable control of public authorities. As there is a commitment to publish, we are reasonably entitled to make our own arrangements to do so.

After weighing up the competing public interest considerations, we consider it is reasonable in all the circumstances that the information held should be withheld from disclosure until the future date of publication (section 22(1)(c)) and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure at this time.

Yours sincerely,

Secretariat to the House of Lords Appointments Commission