



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

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Susan Van de Ven

Date: **25 January 2021**

Dear Ms Van de Ven

Freedom of Information Act 2000 - 10037033

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 22 December 2020 and processed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested:

Please disclose all documents that you hold (including, but not limited to, notes, memos, papers, emails and presentations) relating to a Development Corporation at Cambridge created or received from 01/01/2018 to date.

We can confirm that we hold information within scope of your request but we are withholding it as explained below.

This information is exempt from disclosure under section 35(1)(a) of the FOI Act as it relates to the formulation and development of government policy.

Information falling within this exemption must still be provided however unless it is not in the public interest to do so.

There is always a degree of benefit in making information held by public authorities available as it increases public participation in decision making and aids the transparency and accountability of government. This in turn may serve to increase public trust and confidence in the policy decisions made by Ministers and in good governance.

However, the Department must also consider that government needs a safe space to develop ideas and reach decisions away from external interference and distraction. The information you have requested relates to “live” policy and disclosure of the information would erode unacceptably the safe space mentioned above. Ministers must feel able to consider the information and advice before them and be able to reach objective, fully-informed decisions without impediment and free from distraction that such information will be made public. There are clearly live internal discussions around this policy area and disclosure of the information requested

would inhibit free and frank discussions and would potentially damage the quality of advice and lead to poorer decision making.

We have therefore decided that, on balance, it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this time.

Complaints procedure

If you are unhappy with this response, we will review it and report back to you. (This is called an internal review.) If you want us to do this, let us know by return email within two months of receiving this response. You can also ask by letter addressed to:

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Knowledge and Information Access Team
4th Floor SE, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

If you are unhappy with the outcome of this internal review, you can ask the independent Information Commissioner to investigate. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at email address casework@ico.org.uk or use their online form at ico.org.uk/concerns or call them on 0303 123 1113.

Yours faithfully

MHCLG FOI Team