

[REDACTED]

13 December 2017

2017-18 FOI 015

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your request for information, which has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

In your email you asked the following:

Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to request all information, including the written report thereof, and any notes or notes of telephone conversations or emails, relating to the visit two officers made to the Melbourn and Meldreth area when assessing the objections of Heidi Allan to changes to her constituency. This visit was detailed on your website.

We have carried out a search for materials relating to your request and have identified the following documents are in scope:

Date	Subject
12 May 2017	Typed and agreed minutes of visit to the eastern region.
Undated	Handwritten notes from the visit.

Having considered your request and the information identified above, the Commission's "qualified person" (the Secretary to the Commission) has judged that the release of these papers would be likely to inhibit the free and frank provision of advice, or the free and frank exchange of views for purposes of deliberation. These papers therefore fall under the exemption permitted under section 36 of the FOIA Act 2000. In the Secretary's reasonable opinion, release of this information would be likely to affect detrimentally the Commissioners', Assistant Commissioners' and the Secretariat's ability to consider, discuss and deliberate over different alternative options for Parliamentary constituencies. This in turn, may have a negative effect on the final recommendations that the Commission puts to Government in September 2018.

Section 36 of the FOIA 2000 is a "qualified" exemption, rather than an absolute one, and we have therefore considered, notwithstanding the opinion of the qualified person, whether or not the release of this information is in the public interest. Given the revised proposals published in October 2017 set out the Commission's reasoning in coming up with their proposals, and the minutes of the meeting where they agreed the initial proposals are available on our website, we do not consider that release of this exempted information is in the public interest. The Commission is therefore withholding this information from release under section 36 of the FOIA 2000.

If you have any queries about the content of this reply please contact me direct, quoting the above reference number on any communication.

Under the provisions of the FOI Act if you are dissatisfied with the response provided you may wish to ask for an internal review. The BCE has a reciprocal arrangement with the Boundary Commission for Wales and in this case you should write to:

The Secretary to the Boundary Commission for Wales,
Ground Floor,
Fitzalan Court,
Cardiff,
CF24 0BL
Email: bcomm.wales@wales.gsi.gov.uk

If it transpires you are not content with our response or the internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the BCE. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

The Office of the Information Commissioner,
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire,
SK9 5AF



Mr Chris Wilcox
Information Manager