



[Redacted]

Date
23 December 2024

[Redacted]

Post Office
100 Wood Street
London EC2V 9ER

Your Ref:

Classification:
Public

Dear [Redacted],

Freedom of Information Request – FOI2024/00330

We are writing in response to your email received by Post Office Limited (“**Post Office**”) on 20 February, which has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“**FOIA**”). We sincerely apologise for the delay in responding to your request.

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

“I would like to make a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (2000).

I understand that the Post Office considered a plan to replace Horizon with a new system from IBM. This was referenced by Andrew Bridgen MP in the House of Commons in June 2015, and again on 28 Feb 2023 by former Post Office employee Shaun Turner in his written and oral evidence to the Horizon Inquiry. Mr Turner's evidence suggested it the project was cancelled between December 2015 and March 2017.

I would like to see any internal reports discussing the decision to cancel the project; and any board minutes discussing the decision to cancel the project.”

We can confirm that Post Office does hold the information you have requested. However, some of information is redacted under the exemption in section 40, relating to personal data, and 43(2), as the document contains information that would harm Post Office’s commercial interests.

We have redacted some information under section 40(2) of the FOIA as the information constitutes personal data relating to persons other than you.

These sections 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 because the information relates to Group Executive members of staff who would not reasonably expect their personal details to be disclosed in relation to this request for information.

We have also redacted information under section 43(2) of the FOIA. In applying this exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure. We recognise that there is strong public interest in disclosure of information concerning plans to replace the Horizon with a new system from IBM, particularly due to the ongoing Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry, as this helps promote transparency in Post Office business.

There is, however, a strong public interest in withholding the information as it would, if disclosed, prejudice the commercial interests of Post Office. Disclosure of this information would be likely to give Post Office's competitors a commercial edge and would also be likely to harm Post Office's negotiating position in the future. Some of the information contained in the documents includes sensitive information concerning a third-party organisation and negotiating information which if disclosed could deter third parties from engaging with us. We therefore do not believe it is in the public interest to provide this information.

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/>

Post Office Limited is committed to protecting your privacy, information about how we do this can be found on our website at www.postoffice.co.uk/privacy