

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**

### **Decision notice**

**Date:** 16 August 2023

**Public Authority:** Civil Procedure Rule Committee  
**Address:** Ministry of Justice  
Post Point 5.25  
102 Petty France  
London  
SW1H 9AJ

#### **Decision (including any steps ordered)**

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1. The complainant requested information regarding meeting minutes and attendees of previous Civil Procedure Rule Committee (CPRC) meetings. By the date of this notice CPRC had not issued a substantive response to this request.
2. The Commissioner's decision is that the CPRC has breached section 10(1) of FOIA in that it failed to provide a valid response to the request within the statutory time frame of 20 working days.
3. The Commissioner requires the CPRC to take the following step to ensure compliance with the legislation.
  - The CPRC must provide a substantive response to the request in accordance with its obligations under FOIA.
4. The CPRC must take this step within 35 calendar days of the date of this decision notice. Failure to comply may result in the Commissioner making written certification of this fact to the High Court pursuant to section 54 of FOIA and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

#### **Request and response**

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5. On 19 June 2023, the complainant wrote to the CPRC and requested information in the following terms:

"I would like to request the following information:

1. Copies of any minutes from any meetings of the Costs Committee (<https://www.judiciary.uk/related-offices-and-bodies/advisory-bodies/cjc/previous-work/costs-funding-and-third-party-funding/costs-committee/>) covering the period of the last 18 months.
2. Copies of any communications involving the Costs Sub-Committee which contains of the following terminology:
  - Clinical Negligence
  - Medical Negligence
  - Clin Neg
3. Details of attendees with reference to Point 1.
4. Copies of any and all impact assessments undertaken with respect to the extension of Fixed Recoverable Costs and the Civil Procedure (Amendment No.2) Rules 2023 No. 572 (L. 6).
6. The CRPC failed to acknowledge the request. To date, a substantive response has not been issued.

## **Reasons for decision**

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7. Section 1(1) of FOIA states that:
  - "Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled –
  - (a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and
  - (b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him."
8. Section 10(1) of FOIA states that a public authority must respond to a request promptly and "not later than the twentieth working day following the date of receipt".
9. On 25 July 2023 the Commissioner wrote to the CRPC, reminding it of its responsibilities and asking it to provide a substantive response to the complainant's request within 10 working days.
10. Despite this intervention the CRPC has failed to respond to the complainant.

11. From the evidence provided to the Commissioner in this case, it is clear that the CRPC did not deal with the request for information in accordance with FOIA. The Commissioner finds that the CRCPC has breached section 10(1) by failing to respond to the request within 20 working days and it is now required to respond to the request in accordance with FOIA.

## Right of appeal

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12. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)  
GRC & GRP Tribunals,  
PO Box 9300,  
LEICESTER,  
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0203 936 8963  
Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: [grc@justice.gov.uk](mailto:grc@justice.gov.uk)

Website: [www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber](http://www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber)

13. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
14. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

**Signed .....**

**Michael Lea**  
**Team Manager**  
**Information Commissioner's Office**  
**Wycliffe House**  
**Water Lane**  
**Wilmslow**  
**Cheshire**  
**SK9 5AF**