



Department of Health & Social Care

Freedom of Information Team
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0EU

www.gov.uk/dhsc

Wynne Jones
cj-editor@biggeesblog.cymru

25 March 2021

Dear Wynne Jones,

Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1309753

Thank you for your request dated 25 February, in which you asked the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC):

"I refer to the High Court ruling 19 February 2021 that the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP, acted unlawfully in failing to publish details of billions of pounds' worth of coronavirus-related contracts. I understand there is a legal obligation to publish "contract award notices" within 30 days of contract award. I would be pleased to receive the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. A list of coronavirus-related contracts administered directly, or indirectly, by the Department for Health and Social Care, where the contract award is equal to, or exceeds, £10,000."

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

DHSC holds information relevant to your request.

However, as some of the information held by the Department is in the public domain we will, under Section 21 of the FOIA (information accessible to the applicant by other means), refer you to the published source. The Government publishes all qualifying contracts and our transparency publications show where government money is going so it can be scrutinised. Details of Government contracts above £10,000 are published on Contracts Finder:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>.

All contracts awarded by the Department of Health and Social Care in response to Covid-19 are clearly marked as such.

As some of this information will be published at a future date on Contracts Finder, we are withholding it under Section 22 of the FOIA, which states that public bodies are not obliged to disclose information that is intended for future publication.

Section 22 is a qualified exemption and, as such, we are required to assess the public interest in withholding this information against that of its release. We recognise there is a general public

interest in information being made as freely available as possible. However, there is also a very strong public interest in ensuring that this information is made available to everyone at the same time, thereby ensuring equity of access, and we have therefore concluded that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs that in its release.

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to appeal by asking for an internal review. This should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter and sent to FreedomOfInformation@dhsc.gov.uk, or to the address at the top of this letter.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communication.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have already appealed our original response and received our internal review decision. You should raise your concerns with the ICO within three months of your last meaningful contact with us.

The ICO can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

Yours sincerely,

Piper Hewitt-Dudding
Freedom of Information Officer
FreedomOfInformation@dhsc.gov.uk