

18 August 2023

**Request under The Freedom Of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA)**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information requests dated 24 July 2023, received by email between 10:48am and 10:54am, in which you requested the following:

Heading	Requests
Staff costs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The total financial costs of over time in the year 2022-23</li> <li>2. The total financial costs to recruit staff as a result of resignation and dismissal in the financial year 2022-2023</li> <li>3. The total financial costs spent on recruitment agencies currently being used for the supply of agency staff in the financial year 2022–23</li> <li>4. The total financial costs spent on redundancy payments in the financial year 2022–23</li> </ol>
Compensation payments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The total amount spent on compensation payments in the financial year 2022-23</li> <li>2. The total spent on rectifying errors in the financial year 2022-23</li> </ol>
Fraud losses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the financial year 2022-23 how much money has been lost as a result of fraud?</li> <li>2. In the financial year 2022-23 how much has been spent to retrieve money lost to fraud?</li> </ol>

Public relations and communications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the years 2022 – 23 how much was spent on external companies to handle public relations and communications:- please provide <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the total cost 2022-23 financial year and b) the amount of money paid to each firm (including VAT)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. For the years 2022-23, how much was spent on social media advertising, including a breakdown by year and by form of social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc)</li> </ol>
Written off assets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the years 2022-23 what was the financial loss on written off inventory and IT equipment;</li> <li>2. For the years 2022-23 what was the cost of replacing/fixing broken or out of date IT equipment;</li> <li>3. How much was spent in severance pay in the years 2022-23</li> </ol>
Agency staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please advise the total spend on recruitment agencies in the 2022-23 financial year - Please breakdown both spend on the agency that finds candidates for job vacancies and agencies that supply temporary staff</li> <li>2. Please advise what the temporary agency spend for admin, call centre, data processing and clerical roles in the 2022-2023 financial year?</li> <li>3. Please advise what the temporary agency spend for roles such as warehouse, catering and cleaners in the 2022-2023 financial year?</li> <li>4. Please advise what the permanent agency spend has</li> </ol>

	been in the 2022-2023 financial year?
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### **Clarifications**

We asked you to clarify what you meant by “compensation payments” and by “rectifying errors” in terms of parts 1 and 2 of the heading “Compensation Payments.” You advised by email of the same date at 4:53pm that:

*“By compensation payments I am referring to any payments that have had to be paid out as compensation. So to rectify a mistake. This can be in relation to salaries but also anything else.*

*By rectifying errors I am referring to any financial losses due to human errors.”*

We sought further clarification from you on 17 August in relation to two further points which we needed further information on after investigating internally:-

*“Firstly – you sought information in relation to how much has been “spent on social media advertising including a breakdown by year 2022-23 and by form of social media (eg Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc).” I wondered whether you meant simply the direct spend with each social media provider, or whether you also mean to include spending such as social media content creation?*

*Secondly, as part of your query in relation to agency staff you asked what the permanent agency spend has been in the 2022-23 financial year. Could you kindly advise what you mean by “permanent agency spend”? This isn’t a term that we would use but if you can clarify I will investigate if we hold any information in relation to this.”*

You were on annual leave but a colleague responded as follows:-

*“For social media spending we’d appreciate it if you could also provide details on the spending on social media content creation.*

*For the agency spending could you provide us with details on how much Visit Scotland spent on agency staff during the 2022-23 financial year.”*

### **Exempt information**

Part of the information you have requested is exempt from disclosure in terms of s.27 of FOISA. This is because the information is scheduled for future publication. The exempt information is due to be published in our annual accounts for the year 2022-

23 which are scheduled for publication in December 2023. The accounts require to be audited before they can be published to ensure that the figures included are accurate and verified. In light of this, and having considered the public interest, our decision is to withhold those parts of your request which are schedule to be published in the Annual Accounts.

### **Information not held**

VisitScotland does not hold some of the information you have requested and is not aware of any other public authority that could respond to your request. Section 17 of FOISA states that where public authorities receive requests for information that they do not hold, they must issue a notice advising that they do not hold the requested information. We have outlined below where we do not hold the requested information.

### **Response to request**

We have considered your requests, and can respond as follows:

Request	Responses:-
<p>Staff costs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The total financial costs of over time in the year 2022-23</li> <li>2. The total financial costs to recruit staff as a result of resignation and dismissal in the financial year 2022-2023</li> <li>3. The total financial costs spent on recruitment agencies currently being used for the supply of agency staff in the financial year 2022-23</li> <li>4. The total financial costs spent on redundancy payments in the financial year 2022-23</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. £17,545</li> <li>2. Information not held.</li> <li>3. £205,854.43</li> <li>4. This information will be published as part of our annual accounts.</li> </ol>
<p>Compensation payments</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The total amount spent on compensation payments in the financial year 2022-23</li> <li>2. The total spent on rectifying errors in the financial year 2022-23</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No compensation payments in the year 2022-23.</li> <li>2. No spend attributed to rectifying errors in 2022-23.</li> </ol>

<p>Fraud losses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the financial year 2022-23 how much money has been lost as a result of fraud?</li> <li>2. In the financial year 2022-23 how much has been spent to retrieve money lost to fraud?</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No money has been lost to fraud in 2022-23.</li> <li>2. Nil, as per the above.</li> </ol>
<p>Public relations and communications</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the years 2022 – 23 how much was spent on external companies to handle public relations and communications:- please provide <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the total cost 2022-23 financial year and b) the amount of money paid to each firm (including VAT)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. For the years 2022-23, how much was spent on social media advertising, including a breakdown by year and by form of social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. £135,000 was spent on external public relations and communications, plus £89,000 internal recharges. A breakdown of the suppliers is attached.</li> <li>2. We have sought clarification from you in relation to this point which has now been provided by you. We will provide you with a response within 20 working days.</li> </ol>
<p>Written off assets</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For the years 2022-23 what was the financial loss on written off inventory and IT equipment;</li> <li>2. For the years 2022-23 what was the cost of replacing/fixing broken or out of date IT equipment;</li> <li>3. How much was spent in severance pay in the years 2022-23</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This information will be published as part of our annual accounts.</li> <li>2. While we will include figures for additions and disposal of equipment within our annual accounts, we do not hold information in relation to the reason why an item has been disposed of.</li> <li>3. This information will be published as part of our annual accounts.</li> </ol>
<p>Agency staff</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please advise the total spend on recruitment agencies in the 2022-23 financial year - Please breakdown both spend on the agency that finds candidates for</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Total spend on recruitment agencies is £36,669 in financial year 2022-23. The spend is broken down by agency as follows:-</li> </ol>

<p>job vacancies and agencies that supply temporary staff</p> <p>2. Please advise what the temporary agency spend for admin, call centre, data processing and clerical roles in the 2022-2023 financial year?</p> <p>3. Please advise what the temporary agency spend for roles such as warehouse, catering and cleaners in the 2022-2023 financial year?</p> <p>4. Please advise what the permanent agency spend has been in the 2022-2023 financial year?</p>	<p>Eden Scott: £7,115 FPSG: £5,881 Hays: £4,294 Reed: £19,379</p> <p>2. VisitScotland do not use temporary agency staff for this type of role and therefore the spend is nil. VisitScotland has a limited number administration roles.</p> <p>3. VisitScotland do not use temporary agency staff for this type of role and therefore the spend is nil.</p> <p>4. The answer to this question is captured in 1 above.</p>
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We hope this information is helpful to you. If, however, you are not satisfied with our response or the manner in which we have dealt with your application, you may in the first instance contact our Chief Executive, Malcolm Roughead, whose contact details are set out below:

Mr Malcolm Roughead  
Chief Executive  
VisitScotland  
Ocean Point One  
94 Ocean Drive  
Edinburgh, EH6 6JH  
Telephone: 0131 472 2201  
Fax: 0131 472 2223  
E-mail: [malcolm.roughead@visitscotland.com](mailto:malcolm.roughead@visitscotland.com)

If you wish to request a review of your application under either the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 or the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, your request should be submitted to us in writing, or another permanent format (for example e-mail or voice recording), and be received by us within 40 days of the date of this letter. Any request for a review should also set out, in as much detail as possible, the reasons why you are not satisfied with our response or the manner in which we have dealt with your application.

If you are still not satisfied with our handling of your application after we have

responded to your request for a review, you have a right to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner for a decision on whether we have dealt with your request in accordance with the Act.

The Scottish Information Commissioner may be contacted at:

Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews, Fife  
KY16 9DS  
Telephone: 01334 464610  
Fax: 01334 464611  
E-mail: [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)

You also have the right to appeal to the Court of Session in Scotland on a point of law concerning our response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Donnachie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sarah Donnachie  
Solicitor – Legal and Corporate Affairs  
VisitScotland