

Reference: 02261478

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

15 September 2026

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about a meeting between Matthew Lesh and Ofcom regarding Online Safety Act implementation.

We received this request on 17 August 2026 and we have considered it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOI Act").

Your request

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am requesting information concerning a meeting between Matthew Lesh and a senior Ofcom official regarding implementation of the Online Safety Act.

In an article published on 3 August 2025, Matthew Lesh stated:

"In a separate meeting with a senior Ofcom official responsible for implementing the law..."

The reference appears in the context of the implementation of the Online Safety Act.

The link of the article can be find here: <https://economicaffairs.co.uk/p/online-censorship>

Please provide:

The date and location or format of the meeting;

The name and job title of the senior Ofcom official referred to;

The names and organisations of any other attendees;

Any calendar invitation, meeting invitation or agenda held by Ofcom;

Any briefing, speaking notes or preparatory material produced by Ofcom for the meeting;

Any minutes, meeting notes, readout, action points or other record of the discussion;

Any correspondence between Ofcom and Matthew Lesh, the Institute of Economic Affairs, the Adam Smith Institute, or their representatives arranging or following up on this meeting.

For items 4–7, electronic copies of the records themselves are requested rather than a summary of their contents.

If any material contains exempt information, please provide the remainder with appropriate redactions rather than withholding the document in full, where reasonably practicable. If Ofcom considers that more than one meeting may fit this description, please apply this request to each

potentially relevant meeting. If any information is withheld, please specify the exemption relied upon and, where applicable, the factors considered in the public-interest test.

Our response

In response to the information requested, we consider that this is exempt under section 12 of the FOI Act. Section 12 of the FOI Act provides that a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the “appropriate limit”. The appropriate limit is set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, and is, for Ofcom, £450, which is equivalent to 18-hours. That sum is intended to cover the estimated costs involved in determining whether Ofcom holds the information requested, identifying, locating, retrieving and extracting the information from any document containing it. The Regulations provide that costs are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour.

Your request asks for information and documents in relation to a meeting that is said to have taken place between Matthew Lesh and a “senior Ofcom official responsible for implementing the [Online Safety Act 2023 (“the Online Safety Act”)]”. The alleged identity of this official as well as the date and context of the meeting that is said to have occurred are all unknown. We would therefore have to interpret which Ofcom employees could potentially fall within this description, and ask them to carry out manual searches of their emails, calendars and other saved documents covering an indeterminate period to identify any information within the scope of your request. Given that many different employees across different teams and directorates within Ofcom work on the implementation of the Online Safety Act (including those who could be considered senior officials), a large number of staff members would need to complete such searches.

We would then need to manually extract and review the relevant information, assess and identify any information relevant to your request, and consider whether any exemptions to disclosure apply. This would take us beyond the 18-hour limit for complying with a request.

You may wish to consider submitting a narrower, more specific request, for example by including more details of a specific meeting you are seeking information about or specifying a timeframe, and we would consider this under the FOI Act. Should you decide to make a further request for information, please note aforementioned appropriate limit and/or other exemptions may apply.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office](#).