



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA
foi-team@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

20 February 2025

Dear Adam Smith,

Our ref: FOI2025/01115

Thank you for your email of 23 January, where you make a request for information under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'). Your full request is attached.

The Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer met Bill Gates to discuss cooperation in solving global challenges by embracing investment in innovation. Investment is fundamental to growing the economy and working with global partners can unlock further opportunities.

I can confirm that the Cabinet Office holds a small amount of recorded information in relation to your request. This information is exempt from disclosure under sections 35(1)(a) (*formulation of government policy*) and 43(2) (*commercial interests*) of the Act.

These are qualified exemptions and require my consideration regarding whether the balance of public interest favours releasing or withholding this information.

Public interests in favour of disclosing the information

I recognise that openness in government may increase public trust and engagement with the Government. Furthermore, there is a strong public interest in understanding the Government's relations with business and how the Government works with business to develop appropriate policies.

Public interests in favour of maintaining the exemption at Section 35

I have weighed those public interests against the stronger public interest of ensuring that, in order to be of the highest quality, policy formation and its implementation must be informed by a full consideration of all the options and the Prime Minister relies on his Private Office to provide him with this full considered information.

Ministers must be able to discuss policy freely and frankly, both with officials and third parties and to understand all of the possible implications when developing Government policy. It would not be in the public interest to threaten the candour of all involved, if they were to take the view that the content of the discussions would be disclosed prematurely. This could result in the quality of the debate underlying collective decision-making declining – leading to worse informed and poorer decision making.

Public interests in favour of maintaining the exemption at Section 43

There is a very strong public interest in commercial organisations being able to manage their affairs privately and to represent their interests to central Government in confidence.

These representations are an important source of policy information and advice for the Government and have a positive commercial benefit, as they ensure that the Government is able to take their views into account. This helps Government policy formulation to the benefit of all UK citizens. Disclosure of this information would make commercial enterprise reluctant to make representations to the Government in the future and would harm their commercial interests.

Having carefully considered the balance of public interest, I consider that the information that we hold is commercially sensitive and engages the exemption at Section 43(2) of the Act. Section 43(2) relates to information where the disclosure of which would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it). Such information would be of material use to competitors.

Taking into account all the circumstances of the case, we have determined that the balance of the public interest favours withholding this information.

Finally, this Office does not hold any recorded information in relation to the sixth query of your request.

Yours sincerely,



Freedom of Information Officer

Adam Smith

Incoming request

Keir Starmer met with Bill Gates on October 17, 2024, at 10 Downing Street in London. Their conversation covered a range of topics, including climate change and global health.

Given that Bill Gates lacks formal qualifications in science and is not recognised as an authority on climate issues or global health, I request the following documents:

1. The agenda
2. The briefing notes
3. The list of attendees
4. The meeting notes
5. The action points
6. The schedule for the next meeting

It is perplexing that there are no scheduled meetings with UK scientists specializing in climate control or medical professionals, including Nobel Prize laureates, yet Bill Gates is regarded as an expert in these fields.

I will be submitting a request to the appropriate department regarding Mr. Gates' financial contributions to members of our government unless I receive complete transparency on this matter.



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If you are unhappy with the level of service you have received from this office in relation to any aspect of your request, you may ask for an internal review.

You should contact:

Head of Freedom of Information
Cabinet Office
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Email: foi-team@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

You should note that the Cabinet Office will not normally accept an application for internal review if it is received more than two months after the date that the reply was issued.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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