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Mr Matthew Davis
Data News

Email: matt@datanews.co.uk

31 January 2012

Dear Mr Davis,

Review of request under Freedom of Information Act 2000 **Cabinet Office Reference IC 315233**

We have been contacted by the Information Commissioner's Office regarding your complaint about our response to your request of 8 July 2011 for 'all exchanges of correspondence from the start 1.1.11 to the current date relating to communicating from the Cabinet Office and the All England Lawn Tennis Club, about the provision of invites/tickets to members of the Government and civil servants at this year's Wimbledon.'

Ms Chester has advised me that you provided her with a link to a website showing the Deputy Prime Minister and his wife in attendance at last year's Wimbledon championships on 2 July - additional information for which we are grateful.

Having received this additional information we have checked the search procedure we used when answering your request and have identified an administrative error. The search for information in response your initial request was co-ordinated by two members of staff (one inside No 10 and one for the rest of the Cabinet Office). Each thought that the other had contacted the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, when in fact neither had. I am very sorry for this oversight. I have now taken steps to make the search process more robust for future cases.

I have subsequently established that the Deputy Prime Minister's office in the Cabinet Office does hold some information relevant to your original request, and we are providing you with a redacted copy of this information – please see Annex A, which is separately attached to the covering email.

We have redacted the following information:

- The names and contact details of junior officials in the Cabinet Office, the names and contact details of staff at the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC), and the personal data of the Deputy Prime Minister's wife. This information *constitutes "personal data" of the individuals concerned for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998*. Disclosure would breach one or more of the data protection principles, in particular the first principle on fair and lawful processing of data.

This information is exempt under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) by virtue of section 40(3)(a)(i), which is an absolute exemption and is not subject to a public interest test.

- Information relating to the security arrangements for the Deputy Prime Minister at the event. This information engages exemptions in sections 24(1) and 38(1) of the Act.

Section 24 applies to the security arrangements for Cabinet Ministers. Ministers hold national responsibilities and their protection is obviously a matter of national security. Whilst we recognise the general public interest in openness and transparency, this is outweighed by the very strong public interest in avoiding harm to national security. The balance of public interest therefore falls in favour of maintaining the exemption.

Section 38 applies to information that, if disclosed, would, or would be likely to, endanger the physical or mental health, or the safety, of any individual. We consider that disclosure of this information would or would be likely to harm the safety of the Deputy Prime Minister and his wife and/or his protection team at future events. Again, set against the general public interest in openness and transparency, there is a stronger public interest in withholding information which would allow these individuals to be possibly targeted and attacked, and therefore the balance falls in favour of maintaining the exemption.

Your request also asks for information relating to civil servants invited to last year's Wimbledon. The Cabinet Office (including No.10) does not hold any information relating to invitations from the AELTC to civil servants. However, you may wish to contact other departments for information relating to invitations made to other members of the Cabinet or to civil servants in other departments.

A copy of this letter has been sent to Susan Chester at the Information Commissioner's Office.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RS' with a flourish underneath.

ROGER SMETHURST