

Freedom of Information (FOI): Extracts of Star Chamber meeting notes CRM:0076028

Thank you for your request for information. You requested:

'I therefore request specifically the meeting minutes from January 2015 until and including July 2016 of the Star Chamber Scrutiny Board (SCSB). Either in their original format or copies of that, such as pdf.'

As clarified by the Information Commissioner, the scope of the above request has been defined as:

'Those parts of the Minutes of the Star Chamber Scrutiny Board (SCSB) between January 2015 and July 2016 inclusive which relate to the Additional Data Returns, and only those parts.'

I have dealt with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act").

A copy of information requested is attached to this response (see 'Star Chamber Minutes - Extracts from Jan 2015 to July 2016_Redacted.pdf'). This contains extracts from the Star Chamber minutes for meetings between January 2015 and July 2016 where the minutes relate specifically to the additional data items. We have not provided minutes for meetings during the period in question where there was no discussion of the additional data returns, as these minutes are fully reacted. The relevant minutes where extracts have been provided from are as follows:

- Meeting held on 1 October 2015
- Meeting held on 5 November 2015
- Meeting held on 3 December 2015
- Meeting held on 3 February 2016
- Meeting held on 3 March 2016

The overall information provided includes a small number of redactions under section 40(2) (personal data) of the Act. This is because the information in question includes third party personal data. Personal data is that which relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data, or from that data and other information which is likely to be in, or to come into, the possession of the requestor. Disclosure of this information would contravene a number of the data protection principles in the Data Protection Act 1998, and would be regarded as 'unfair'. By that, we mean the likely expectations of the data subject that his or her information would not be disclosed to others and the effect which disclosure would have on the data subject. Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and is not subject to the public interest test.

To assist with interpreting the extracts provided above, it will be useful to note that the terms of reference of the Star Chamber Scrutiny Board are clear in that it is their responsibility to represent the sector and ensure that all departmental data collection proposals are necessary, provide value for money and are designed to add as small a burden to the frontline as possible. Decisions on whether the Department releases personal data held by the Department in the national pupil database to third parties (including other government departments) are subject to a separately governed robust approval process.

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