

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**

### **Decision notice**

**Date:** 17 January 2018

**Public Authority:** Home Office  
**Address:** 2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

#### **Decision (including any steps ordered)**

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1. The complainant has requested information from the Home Office regarding Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council's involvement with the Syrian Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme.
2. The Commissioner's decision is that the Home Office has breached section 10(1) of the FOIA as it has failed to give a substantive response to this request.
3. The Commissioner requires the public authority to take the following steps to ensure compliance with the legislation.
  - The Home Office must issue a response to the request in accordance with its obligations under the FOIA.
4. The public authority must take these steps within 35 calendar days of the date of this decision notice. Failure to comply may result in the Commissioner making written certification of this fact to the High Court pursuant to section 54 of the Act and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

#### **Request and response**

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5. On 29 July 2017, the complainant wrote to the Home Office and requested information in the following terms:

*"Please can you provide me with the following information regarding the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS), also known as Syrian vulnerable person resettlement programme.*

*Has Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council taken any refugees under this scheme, since the creation of the scheme. If so, please provide the total financial aid granted to Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council?*

*Authorities are able to pledge requests to resettle Syrian refugees under this scheme, has Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council pledged a figure for the number of refugees they can resettle under this scheme and if so what would be the financial payments to Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council?"*

6. The Home Office responded on 31 July 2017. It stated that it aimed to send a full response by 30 August 2017.
7. On the 27 September 2017 the Home Office apologised for the delay in providing a response and said they would send a reply as soon as they could.

### **Scope of the case**

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8. The complainant contacted the Commissioner on 24 October 2017 to complain about the way his request for information had been handled.
9. Following receipt of the complaint the Commissioner contacted the Home Office, reminding it of its responsibilities and asking it to respond to the complainant within 10 working days.
10. Despite this intervention the Home Office has failed to respond to the complainant.

### **Reasons for decision**

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11. Section 10(1) of FOIA states that:

*"Subject to subsections (2) and (3), a public authority must comply with section 1(1) promptly and in any event not later than the twentieth working day following the date of receipt."*

12. As a response has not yet been provided by the Home Office the Commissioner finds that the Home Office has breached section 10(1) in failing to respond within 20 working days.

## Right of appeal

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13. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)  
GRC & GRP Tribunals,  
PO Box 9300,  
LEICESTER,  
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0300 1234504

Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: [GRC@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:GRC@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber](http://www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber)

14. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
15. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

**Signed .....**

**Alun Johnson**  
**Team Manager**  
**Information Commissioner's Office**  
**Wycliffe House**  
**Water Lane**  
**Wilmslow**  
**Cheshire**  
**SK9 5AF**