

# *Christ Church*

OXFORD OX1 1DP

Our Ref: JL/SG

11 May 2021

Alan Fox Esq

By email only: request-747115-76fd110d@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Mr Fox,

I write in reply to your emails of 14 April 2021, requesting:

*"the amount of money spent by Christ Church on the action against the Dean, including legal fees, tribunal costs, expert advice (legal and otherwise), Public Relations expenditure, and any other related spend for the period April 2020 to April 2021."*

## *Response*

Christ Church cannot comply with your request, as we estimate the time required to determine whether the information is held and if so, to locate, retrieve and extract it, would exceed the maximum amount of time a public authority is required to spend.

In order to respond to your requests, members of Christ Church staff and our external advisors would need to search through extensive electronic records and invoices and sift through the narratives provided to establish which items relate to "action against the Dean" as opposed to other matters that the College has sought external advice on during that period. Whilst I cannot confirm the areas of advice that the College has sought advice on, I can confirm that the invoices have not related solely to action against the Dean and matters opened by our advisors for the advice given are neither split up, nor categorised in this way. Whilst we appreciate we were able to provide you with a global figure in relation to your previous request, I note that the work I have explained above had already been undertaken for a submission to the Charity Commission and therefore, the exemption did not apply to your earlier request. On that occasion most of the information requested had already been sought by, and provided to, the Charity Commission. The time needed to consider any extra information we held, where this had not already been provided to the Charity Commission, only required a small amount of extra time to be incurred.

On this request, we estimate that the time required to complete such an exercise is likely to exceed 18 hours. This is because, in order to locate, retrieve, extract and provide the data that was previously disclosed to the Charity Commission, our external advisors alone spent significantly in excess of that amount of time - indeed the paralegal time for one external provider alone amounted to almost 21 hours. Therefore, section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act therefore applies. Section 12 allows a public authority to refuse requests if the authority estimates that the cost of complying would exceed the 'appropriate limit' prescribed

**James Lawrie, Treasurer**

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in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. The appropriate limit for universities is £450, which corresponds to a time limit of 18 hours.

We have considered whether the time required to comply with your requests could be significantly reduced if they were constructed differently or were more focussed or time limited. However, given the nature of the requests, we cannot make a practical suggestion in this regard and even if your requests were constructed differently, that may not help to reduce our time estimate in light of our assessment regarding the amount of time it would require to search the records.

For the sake of completeness as the request was received on 14 April 2021, we would also be unable to provide any information in respect of the period 15 -30 April 2021 as this information was not held on 14 April 2021.

#### **INTERNAL REVIEW**

If you are dissatisfied with this reply, you may ask the College to review it, by writing to the Censor Theologiae, Professor Ian Watson, at the following email address: [media@chch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:media@chch.ox.ac.uk).

yours sincerely

