

Reference Number: DAERA/26-430



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Depairtment o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

**Veterinary Service Animal Health
Group**
Information Communications Branch

Email:

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VSAHG Information Communications Branch
1st Floor
Jubilee House
111 Ballykelly Road
Limavady
BT49 9HP

E-mail: vsinfocommsbranch@daera-ni.gov.uk

09 July 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000

With regard to your request for information received by the Department on 22 June 2026 which sought the following information:

Information relating to any animal welfare investigations, enforcement actions, prosecutions or Court Proceedings involving:

Jungle Pets, Cloughmills Co.Antrim and/or Richard Potter for the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023.

Specifically, I request –

- 1. Whether DAERA investigated any animal welfare complaints concerning Jungle Pets or Richard Potter during this period.**
- 2. Whether any prosecutions or enforcement actions were initiated.**
- 3. If court Proceedings took place, the date of the Proceedings and the outcome (for example conviction, acquittal, withdrawal of charges adjournment or other disposal).**

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4. Any penalties, fines, disqualifications or other orders imposed by the court where disclosure is permitted.

5. Copies of any press releases or public statements issued by DAERA concerning these matters. If any part of this request is exempt from disclosure, please provide the remaining information and explain the exemption relied upon.

The Department can neither confirm nor deny that it holds the information you requested, as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply by virtue of the following exemptions:

**Section 40(5) (a)(b) Personal Information and
Section 30(3) Investigations & Proceedings.**

Information disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act is disclosed into the public domain, effectively to the world, not just to one individual. To confirm or deny whether information exists which would contain personal data could publicly reveal information about an individual or individuals, thereby breaching the right to privacy afforded to persons under the Data Protection Act 2018.

When confirming or denying that information is held would breach an individual's rights under the Data Protection Act 2018, Section 40(5) becomes an absolute exemption, and there is no requirement for the Department to provide evidence of the prejudice that would occur, or to conduct a public interest test.

In these instances, the Department is required to consider if disclosure would breach the first Data Protection Principle which states that processing must be lawful, fair and transparent. A Lawful, Fairness and Transparency test has been carried out and is attached at **Annex A**. The Department has determined that no lawful basis for disclosure under FOI exists, bearing in mind that any such disclosure must be considered in terms of disclosure to the “world at large”, and not just you, the requester. Consequently, any personal data falling within the scope of this request has been withheld.

In addition, the Department considers that the exemption at Section 30(3) of the Freedom of Information Act, relating to investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities, applies in this case. As Section 30 is a qualified exemption, the Department is required to consider the public interest in maintaining the exemption. A Public Interest Test has therefore been carried out and is attached at **Annex B**.

If you require any clarification, believe that any part of your request has been overlooked, misunderstood or misinterpreted, please contact me in the first instance to see if it is a matter that can be resolved.

If you are unhappy with the manner in which your request for information has been handled or the decision to release/withhold information, you have the right to request a formal review by the Department. If you wish to do so, please contact The Review Section either by e-mailing daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk or by post at The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection &

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Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Jubilee House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, Limavady BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review of the Department's decision.

Yours sincerely,



Veterinary Service Animal Health Group

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