

Environment Marine and Fisheries
Group
Resource Efficiency Division



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

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Your reference:

Our reference: DAERA/2019-0362

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Mobuoy Remediation Project
Ballykelly House
111 Ballykelly Road
LIMAVADY
BT49 9HP

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

04 December 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Environmental Information Regulations 2004

I refer to your request for information received by the Department on 12 November 2019 that sought the following information and can confirm that the Department holds some of the information requested:

1. Details in relation to the NIEA's & DAERA's decision to postpone the Mobuoy Stakeholders meeting and to establish the rationale behind it.
2. Copies of minutes of all meetings held within the NIEA and DAERA to discuss this postponement and records of all discussions around postponing the Mobuoy Stakeholders meetings.

DAERA is committed to conducting its business in a manner that is as open and transparent as possible and therefore all details of the decision making process in respect to your queries are included below:

Query 1: It should be noted from the outset that there were no formal meetings convened to consider the postponement of the stakeholder events. All correspondence relating to the decision was undertaken by email or telephone and copies of all relevant correspondence are included below:

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**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

On 01 November arrangements were ongoing with the Departmental Information Office (DIO) to agree the Public Notices / Social Media notices to advertise the stakeholder engagement events planned for 26th and 27th Nov (**Annex A refers**).

The query to consider the potential of political parties to make comment or gain if the event proceeded was initially raised by the DIO to the project director and was subsequently shared via email with the project's Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) and the wider project team for comment. The SRO acknowledged that guidance for NICS staff on general elections 2019 had just issued and needed to be considered in relation to the proposed stakeholder event. (**Annex B refers**).

The project team members all initially considered that the event was predominantly sharing of information and that it should proceed although it was also acknowledged that the Mobuoy project has significant political interest especially in the NW and that there was also therefore potential for it to compete for public attention (**Annex C refers**).

A risk assessment undertaken on 05 November 2019 subsequently recommended postponement on the basis that a public meeting being held so close to the date of the election had the potential to raise the issue in the political arena and compete for public attention. (**Annex D refers**). The same correspondence also noted advice from a telephone call with the Departmental Solicitors Office which also supported the postponement of the event until after election. The SRO confirmed the final decision to postpone in E-mail dated 06 November 2019. (**Annex D refers**)

Query 2; Copies of all correspondence relating to the postponement of the Mobuoy Stakeholders meetings referred to above are included at **Annexes A to D**:

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 write to The Review Section, The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Data Protection & Information Management Branch, Floor 2, Ballykelly House, 111 Ballykelly Road, Ballykelly, LIMAVADY, BT49 9HP, within two months from the date of this letter.

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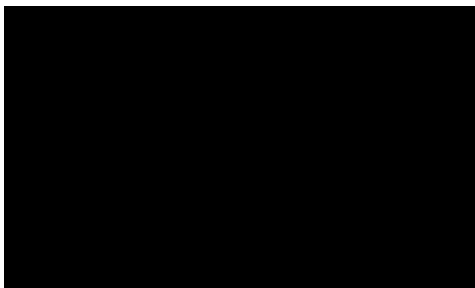
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If after such an internal review you are still unhappy with the response, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE, SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review of the Department's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

Your letter also contained a request that is not considered as a request for information that the Mobuoy stakeholders meetings be held as originally planned on the 26th and 27th of November 2019. The Department is unfortunately unable to accede to this request. The Department is however in the process of arranging new dates for the stakeholder meetings after the election early in New Year.

Yours sincerely,



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