

Please advise;-

1. All total DFC estimates for the cost and delivery of the Casement Park project as time has progressed since 2011?
2. This would include the need to find a replacement contractor in place of Buckingham Group and Heron Brothers, the actual cost of the project and how that will be funded.
3. Please release a proper, detailed update on the Casement Park project, including details of the department's most recent 'Gateway Review', the actual costings for the project and the timeline in terms of the appointment of a contractor.
4. Please release plans for the second tranche of investment due for Northern Ireland football which has been promised for a decade.

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DFC/2024-0043

20 March 2024

Dear

## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION REQUEST – CASEMENT PARK REDEVELOPMENT**

Thank you for your email of 20 February 2024, in which you requested the information below.

The Department has addressed your request under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR 2004).

1. ***All total DfC estimates for the cost and delivery of the Casement Park project as time has progressed since 2011. This would include the need to find a replacement contractor in place of Buckingham Group and funded.***

Response: DfC cost estimates since 2011 are:

- £77.5 million – 2011
- £110 - £112 million 2019
- £112 - £140 million 2023

In response to the second part of your question, for commercial reasons we will not be providing any comment on costs at this time in accordance with regulation 12(5)(e) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Regulation 12(5)(e) states that a public authority may refuse to disclose information to the extent that its disclosure would adversely affect the confidentiality of commercial or industrial information where such confidentiality is provided by law to protect a legitimate economic interest.

As required under EIR I have conducted a Public Interest Test to decide if the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information. The Public Interest arguments are set out below.

Public Interest arguments in favour of not maintaining the exception (i.e. for disclosure)

- Would promote transparency and accountability where the spending of public money is concerned.
- Demonstrate value for money and making best use of resources.
- The right of the public to have access to the information.
- There is considerable public interest in the redevelopment of Casement Park.

Public Interest arguments in favour of maintaining the exceptions (against disclosure)

- As the project cost is a live issue, premature disclosure of information in an unfinished form could potentially be misleading.
- A contractor is not currently in place for the project, therefore, there is a significant risk that disclosure of the requested information could close off discussion or prejudice Departmental discussions around cost.
- Premature disclosure of developing cost estimates could compromise the confidential economic interests of potential contractors.
- It is not in the public interest to disclose information in relation to costs before officials have been allowed to assess and consider all the available options, conduct discussions and consider all available information before making decisions. These actions must be conducted with the confidence that there is no risk that those discussions, deliberations, evaluations and considerations will be disclosed prematurely.

2. ***Please release a proper detailed update on the Casement Park project, including details of the departments most recent 'gateway review', the actual costings for the project and the timeline in terms of an appointment of a contractor.***

Response: The last Gateway Review undertaken by UCGAA for the Casement Park project was concluded on 13 December 2013. The below recommendations were made at the last Gateway Review:

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Critical/ Essential/ Recommended</b>
1.	The SRO should ensure that the management of issues and risks in the next phase is agreed and captured formally in a risk and issue document accessible to all parties.	Essential by end January 2014
2.	The SRO should instigate a workshop to identify and review emerging risks.	Essential by end January 2014
3.	The SRO should instigate an exercise to ensure that the submitted tender and is thoroughly understood before meeting with the IST.	Critical
4.	The SRO should request that GAA and DCAL publish their internal process by which payments are managed.	Recommended
5.	The client project team should ensure that suitably qualified individual(s) are representing the clients' interest and the relationships between all parties are thoroughly understood and tested	Critical

- Following the withdrawal of Heron Bros as the main works contractor, work is progressing on the Casement Park project to procure a new contractor for the main works, utilising the Cabinet Crown Commercial Services Framework. The expression of interest stage has now concluded, and a short list of contractors has been identified.

- The Ulster Council of the GAA has started pre-enabling works on site through its own contract, separate to the main construction contract.
- The Department is continuing to work closely with the UCGAA and all its partners across Government, local government, and the Irish FA to ensure delivery in line with the UEFA requirements to have construction complete by June 2027, for the hosting of Euro 2028 matches in Northern Ireland.
- The response to your question on costs is covered in the response to question one above.

3. ***Please release plans for the second tranche of investment due for Northern Ireland football which has been promised for a decade.***

Response: The Department does not hold plans for a second tranche of investment for football. Work is on-going with stakeholders to develop a number of options to present to the Minister for consideration.

If you are dissatisfied with this response and wish to request a review of our decision or make a complaint about how your request has been handled, you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. You should write to the Information Access Manager, Department for Communities, Information Management Branch, Causeway Exchange, 1-7 Bedford Street, BELFAST, BT2 7EG, or send an email to [foi@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:foi@communities-ni.gov.uk).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a review of our original decision.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

**Regional Stadia Programme Team**