

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY



By email

Our Ref: **MGLA060617-4461**

13 June 2017

Dear 

Thank you for your request for information which the Greater London Authority (GLA) received on 6 June 2017. Your request has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested

I would like to know what organisations have gained access to the Mayor in the last year, and what they have requested access for. i.e. meeting to discuss transport policy.

I can confirm that the GLA does hold information within the scope of your request.

We will not have a record of “all organisations that have gained access to the Mayor” because we do not keep records of everyone who meets the Mayor at events that he attends in his capacity as Mayor. However, we do hold records that will show pre-arranged meetings and the Mayor’s attendance at key events. I refer to:

- the Mayor’s diary
- the Mayor’s report which covers key engagements

In line with our publication scheme, the Mayor’s diary is published on our website twice a year. The GLA has already published the Mayor’s diary covering the period May to October 2016. The next publication of the diary will include dates from November to April and will likely take place in June/July.

The Mayor’s key engagements are also published in the Mayor’s report which forms part the meeting papers at each Mayor’s Question Time.

In relation to information which the GLA holds and intends to publish, section 22 of the FoI Act provides an exemption for information that is intended to be published in the future.

Information is exempt if, at the time when the public authority receives a request for it:

- the public authority holds the requested information;
- the public authority intends the information to be published at some future date, whether that date is determined or not; and
- in all the circumstances it is reasonable to withhold the information until its planned publication.

Section 22 acknowledges that public authorities must have freedom to be able to determine their own publication timetables. This allows them to deal with the necessary preparation, administration and context of publication.

It is however necessary to consider whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and withholding the information until the publication date), is greater than the public interest in releasing the information before this date.

In this instance, it is felt that there is a greater public interest for the GLA to keep to its original timetable of disclosure. The decision to publish the Mayor's diary on a six month basis was made in order to allow the Mayor's office to effectively manage their workload and the work required to prepare such a large amount of information for publication.

The decision to proactively publish the Mayor's diary demonstrates the GLA's commitment to openness and transparency and we believe a six month publication cycle for this information is appropriate. The public interest in the release of the Mayor's meetings and key engagements is also met by the more regular publication of the Mayor's report.

The public interest – i.e. the best interests of the public – is met by the GLA being open and transparent, but also by managing its resources effectively, and this includes setting reasonable publication schedules to meet this public interest.

While there is an obvious public interest in the release of the Mayor's diary, we believe this is met by our intention to publish this information in the coming months. We do not believe the public interest favours the disruption that would be caused to GLA staff by expediting this publication when its early publication would not meet any immediate or exceptional public concerns at the present time.

We therefore find the balance of public interest falls in maintaining the exemption and the GLA publishing this information in accordance with our existing publication timetable.

The proposed date to release this information is likely to be June 2017 and we do not consider this to be an unreasonable period to wait for the publication of this information, given the information already published. For your reference the information will be made available on [this page](#).

If you already know of, or identify, a meeting that you have a particular interest in, we can conduct focused searches for information relating to that meeting.

If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Phillips
Information Governance Officer

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at:
<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/governance-and-spending/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>