

Document 1

From: Redacted <[redacted]@whatdotheyknow.com>
Sent: 09 March 2022 22:47
To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>
Subject: Freedom of Information request - Governance Issues in Lanarkshire Region

Dear Scottish Government Directorate of Advanced Learning and Science

I write under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, and request the following information:

1.The Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act 2013 confirms that the SFC may 'review a college' and 'on completing a review, the Council must provide a report of the review to the Scottish Ministers'. What information has the Scottish Government received from the Scottish Funding Council in relation to the governance review of South Lanarkshire College which it concluded in August 2021?

2.Please provide a copy of all information and advice received from the SFC in relation to this matter.

3.What action has the Scottish Government subsequently taken in response to the information and advice provided by the SFC and the now very public governance crisis which is playing out in that region?

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted]

Document 2

From: [Redacted] <[Redacted]@whatdotheyknow.com>
Sent: 07 April 2022 09:32
To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>
Subject: Internal review of Freedom of Information request - Governance Issues in Lanarkshire Region

Dear Scottish Government,

Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.

I am writing to request an internal review of Scottish Government's handling of my FOI request 'Governance Issues in Lanarkshire Region'.

My FOI request asked specifically about actions in relation to the public governance crisis within the Lanarkshire region. Your generic response provides no information

on this. Please confirm if any action has been taken by the Scottish Government in relation to this matter. And, if any, what that was.

I also asked for copies of any relevant communications between the Scottish Government and relevant bodies (SFC, SLC, NCL) over the period 2021 and 2022. Please confirm that there has been no communications between any of these parties over the period about this matter, or provide the information.

A full history of my FOI request and all correspondence is available on the Internet at this address:

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/governance_issues_in_lanarkshire

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Document 3

From: [redacted]

<[redacted]@whatdotheyknow.com>

Sent: 16 May 2022 11:51

To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>

Subject: Freedom of Information request - Governance Crisis at South Lanarkshire College: First Minister's Actions

Dear Scottish Government,

I write with reference to the First Minister's comments in parliament on 21 April 2022, under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, and request the following information:

- The First Minister stated in the parliament on 21 April 2022 that the SFC could consider 'further inquiry or investigation' into the governance crisis at South Lanarkshire College.

Please provide copies of any supporting documentation which captures any SFC advice provided to the Scottish Government in response to this statement by the First Minister.

- The First Minister also stated that she was 'happy to consider whether there is any further action or procedure that the Scottish Government can initiate'. Please provide copies of any supporting documentation which captures any advice provided to Scottish Ministers in response to this statement by the First Minister, as well as a copy of any communication(s) provided to the MSP, Graham Simpson.

Please provide written confirmation of receipt of my FOI request.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Document 4

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@whatdotheyknow.com>
Sent: 18 May 2022 16:45
To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>
Subject: Freedom of Information request - Intervention at South Lanarkshire College: PAC 12th May

Dear Scottish Government : Advanced Learning and Science Directorate

I write with reference to the Auditor General's comments at a parliamentary audit committee meeting on 12th May, as reported in the Herald (13th May 2022), under the terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, and request the following information:

- Given the increasing scrutiny of the governance failings at South Lanarkshire College under its Chair, Andy Kerr, what action is the Scottish Government taking to restore effective operation at this public body? Please provide documentation to evidence this.
- Given the suggestion at the committee hearing that Police Scotland should be involved, what action has the Scottish Government taken to ensure that appropriate action is being taken by the College Board in relation to the significant governance failings at this college? Please provide documentation to evidence any action taken. The College has not yet contacted Police Scotland (Herald 13th May), which feels like an inappropriate response for a public body.
- Given the Vote of No Confidence in the SLC Chair and SLC Board by EIS/FELA and Unison members in Dec 2021, what actions has the Scottish Government to address the concerns of both unions and staff at the College?
- Given the synergies between this situation and that of Clyde College, why has the Scottish Government not yet intervened in the manner which it did with that institution? What are the differences in the two situations? Please provide documentation to evidence this.

Please provide written confirmation of receipt of my FOI request.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Document 5

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@whatdotheyknow.com>
Sent: 15 June 2022 15:28
To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>
Subject: Internal review of Freedom of Information request - Governance Issues in Lanarkshire Region - Directorate of Advanced Learning and Science

Dear Scottish Government,

Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.

I am writing to request an internal review of Scottish Government's handling of my FOI request 'Governance Issues in Lanarkshire Region - Directorate of Advanced Learning and Science'.

Thank you for your response of 10 June to my FOI request of 11 May about the actions being taken by the Scottish Government in relation to the governance failings at South Lanarkshire College.

In your response you state:

Question 1 - It is not the role of the Scottish Government to consider additional intervention as it the responsibility of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) to investigate any potential issues around governance in Scotland's colleges.

You also asked for "copies of all documentation which has supported the decision-making". The Scottish Government does not have the information you have asked for as it is the responsibility of the SFC to investigate potential governance issues. Therefore SG does not hold copies of any documentation that has supported a decision making process.

You state the above despite providing a link to the parliamentary statement made by a previous minister for further education, Angela Constance, as she removed the board of Clyde College in 2015, and described in detail the significant actions taken by Scottish Government ministers and officials to rectify the situation at Clyde College – which was less public, less costly to the public purse, less impactful on the staff, students and college community at SLC.

This makes no sense therefore I would welcome a review of your response to this query and a more coherent response to a matter of significant public interest.

Please acknowledge receipt of my request for an internal review.

A full history of my FOI request and all correspondence is available on the Internet at this address:

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/governance_issues_in_lanarkshire_5

Yours faithfully,
[redacted]

Document 6

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@whatdotheyknow.com>
Sent: 14 July 2022 16:57
To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>
Subject: Internal review of Freedom of Information request - Intervention at South Lanarkshire College: PAC 12th May

Dear Scottish Government,

Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.

Thank you for your response of 17 June to my FOI request of 18 May in relation to Scottish Government intervention at South Lanarkshire College, given the very public governance failings at that institution, which have been played out in the media since December 2021 and have put both the college and the sector in disrepute.

I request an internal review of your response given your refusal or omission to provide the requested information on the grounds below:

- Question 4 – given the synergies between this situation and that of Clyde College, why has the Scottish Government not yet intervened in the manner which it did with that institution? What are the differences in the two situations? Please provide relevant information to support the Scottish Government's Position.

Please acknowledge receipt of my request for an internal review.

A full history of my FOI request and all correspondence is available on the Internet at this address:

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/intervention_at_south_lanarkshir

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Document 7

From: Clare Haughey MSP <Clare.Haughey.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: 25 July 2022 13:04

To: Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <CabSecES@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: South Lanarkshire College (Case Ref: CH6716)

Dear Shirley-Anne,

Please see, below, an email from my constituent, [redacted], who raises concerns about an investigation by the Scottish Funding Council into issues at South Lanarkshire College.

In order that I might best assist my constituent, I would be grateful if you could advise if there is any update available on the investigation, or when it might be concluded.

Best regards,

Clare

Clare Haughey MSP
Rutherglen Constituency

From: [redacted]@aol.com
Sent: 12 July 2022 22:28
To: Haughey C (Clare), MSP
Subject: South Lanarkshire College

Hi [redacted]

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/20271898.south-lanarkshire-college-education-secretary-accused-failing-act/>

I have been following events in the press concerning the situation at South Lanarkshire College for some time now and enclose the latest article in today's Herald. This latest article states that appeals had been sent to both the First Minister and the Education Secretary asking them to intervene in the hope that a meaningful update on the investigation by the Scottish Funding Council can be obtained as a matter of urgency. Frankly, the circumstances surrounding the SLC are very worrying and we are entitled to answers. In my opinion the Scottish Funding Council should be under investigation itself for the way this has all been handled. An interim review by the SFC was completed mid 2021 and little progress has been seen since.

This is really not acceptable. Ms Somerville was contacted by what's called the "college leadership" in November of last year just before the college principal was suspended. Nothing appears to have happened since. SLC attracts a significant amount of funding and it is very disturbing that all these allegations remain unaddressed. We need action to be taken by Ms Somerville, now. I would be obliged if you would raise this matter with her at the earliest opportunity. These allegations are serious and it is deeply worrying that no one at Scottish Government level appears to be concerned either by the complaints raised or the failure of the Scottish Funding Council to deal with them in a transparent manner. Two people remain suspended and that really isn't acceptable either.

South Lanarkshire College began life in the humble surroundings of Cambuslang School of Building, behind the old library. It then moved to premises previously occupied by Trinity High in Hamilton Road. Another campus was opened in East Kilbride. Then, the whole thing was decamped to East Kilbride and Cambuslang lost the college for good. Millions have been spent on the college. It is sad indeed to now hear so many rumours about fraudulent practices which, frankly, damage the reputation of the college. It doesn't help if we see no progress in the investigation after such a long time.

Regards

[redacted]

Document 8

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@thetimes.co.uk>

Sent: 01 August 2022 14:01

To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>

Subject: South Lanarkshire College

Good afternoon,

Please send me any information held by the Scottish government relating to allegations of criminality, theft, fraud or other misconduct at South Lanarkshire College.

Regards,

[redacted]

Document 9

[redacted]@thetimes.co.uk

Good afternoon,

Your letter said "some" information has been redacted but you have not sent me any information.

Is there something missing?

Thanks,

[redacted]

Document 10

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@slc.ac.uk> **On Behalf Of** [redacted]
Sent: 13 October 2022 10:44
To: [redacted] <[redacted]@slc.ac.uk>
Subject: South Lanarkshire College Graduation Ceremony 2022 Invitation

Dear guest

Please find attached invitation to our Graduation Ceremony 2022.

Please could you indicate whether you will be attending by Monday 24th October 2022.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

[redacted]

Document 10 – Attachment

Graduation

Alan Sherry, OBE, Acting Principal of South Lanarkshire College invites you to join us in celebrating the achievements and success of our 2022 HE students at this year's Graduation ceremony.

The ceremony will take place on Wednesday 2 November 1:30pm until 3:30pm at Hamilton Town House

We would be delighted for you to join us on the day.

RSVP to [redacted]
[redacted]@slc.ac.uk or
[redacted] by 21 October



Document 11

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@slc.ac.uk>

Sent: 11 August 2022 14:43

To: [redacted] <[redacted]@gov.scot>

Subject: Ministerial Visit

Hi [redacted]

I hope that you are well?....It is 'that time of year' again !!

Once again we are hoping that Ms Haughey may be willing to visit our HNC students as they embark on their study within South Lanarkshire College. Over recent years we have met successfully via TEAMS and we would be happy to do so again , however . if Ms Haughey would prefer to visit us 'on site' (and sample of the lovely scones !!) we would be more than delighted to facilitate this. As in previous years we would like to invite Ms Haughey to share with our students some of the challenges facing the Government in relation to Early Years along with sharing some of the many success stories !

We can be very flexible around dates , please just let me know if Ms Haughey has any availability and we can work out the best option

Regards

[redacted]

South Lanarkshire College

Document 12

From: [redacted] <[redacted]@whatdotheyknow.com>

Sent: 19 May 2022 16:28

To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>

Subject: Internal review of Freedom of Information request - Governance Issues in Lanarkshire Region

Dear Scottish Government, Directorate of Advanced Learning and Science

Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.

I am writing to request an internal review of Scottish Government's handling of my FOI request 'Governance Issues in Lanarkshire Region'.

I note that you have not confirmed or denied whether the authority holds this information, and have not applied an exemption that would remove this obligation.

As you may be aware, Section 1(1) of the FOI Act (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/section/1>) states that "Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request".

I would be grateful if you could clarify whether or not this information is held, or specify which exemption of the duty to confirm or deny you are applying.

A full history of my FOI request and all correspondence is available on the Internet at this address:

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/governance_issues_in_lanarkshire_3

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]