

EIR Request (received 12 August 2026) - Reference: DFI/2026-0522

Under the freedom of information act:

Please provide all information relating to the recent meeting the Minister held with Mr Rich Davey and Mr Sean O'Brien.

Please include all written correspondence, submissions, texts email etc in relation to the meeting.

Please advise on the exact areas that were discussed for future engagement and collaboration.

Please provide details on the role of Mr Mairtin O'Mulleoir at the meeting and any communications with Mr O'Mulleoir in relation to the meeting.

Response (issued 09 September 2026)

Thank you for your letter dated 12th August 2026 requesting information held by the Department for Infrastructure, under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). You requested the following:

- 1. Please provide all information relating to the recent meeting the Minister held with Mr Rich Davey and Mr Sean O'Brien.*
- 2. Please include all written correspondence, submissions, texts email etc in relation to the meeting.*
- 3. Please advise on the exact areas that were discussed for future engagement and collaboration.*
- 4. Please provide details on the role of Mr Mairtin O'Mulleoir at the meeting and any communications with Mr O'Mulleoir in relation to the meeting.*

In considering your request on behalf of the Department I have determined that the information requested falls under the aegis of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, as opposed to the FOI Act 2000. Section 39 of the Freedom of Information Act specifically excludes from consideration under that Act requests for what is deemed to be environmental information. EIR gives rights of public access to environmental information held by public authorities.

A guide explaining the Environmental Information Regulations can be found at: [Guide to the Environmental Information Regulations | ICO](#).

In response to your request, I can confirm that the Department for Infrastructure does hold some information related to your request. As EIR relates to public rights of access to information, I must consider whether information is suitable for release to the world at large, and not solely to the applicant. I have examined the information you requested and carried out a public interest test to determine whether this information is suitable for release to the public.

I can advise you as follows, in relation to each of your questions:

1. Please see attached further documentation to address statements 1-4. Some of the attached information has been redacted, for the following reasons.

Some of the information has been redacted because it falls outside the scope of your request. In addition, the Department has, following consideration of the public interest in this case, redacted some information because it constitutes third party personal data within the meaning of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA). A public authority may only release third party personal data if to do so would be fair, lawful and would meet the conditions in Schedule 2, 3 or 4 of the DPA. The Department may not disclose personal information to the public in contravention of any of the data protection principles (Article 5(1) UK General Data Protection Regulation or sections 34(1) and 85(1) DPA) and must consider all consequences of disclosure in each case.

The information provided has therefore been redacted under the exception provided under EIR by Regulation 12(3) & 13: personal information. I am satisfied that the public interest is best served by withholding this information.

Some of the redacted information constitutes commercially sensitive information which, being neither trivial nor in the public domain, meets the Common Law's necessary quality of confidence. The information is being withheld from disclosure to protect the legitimate economic interests of both the Department and third parties.

Disclosure of this commercially confidential information would undermine the third party's reasonable and actionable expectation of confidentiality. The information is current and placing it in the public domain would cause harm to Belfast Harbour.

Disclosure would clearly allow the public, in particular economic competitors, to identify commercial rates/costs for carrying out these activities. This would have the effect of creating a competitive advantage for competitors and would clearly have an adverse effect on the commercial [bargaining] position of the Harbour in future similar competitions.

Making the information available to the public would damage the Department's own legitimate economic interests. It would compromise future competitive tendering for these services and would prevent the Department achieving the best value for money for the public purse.

The information provided has therefore been redacted under the exception provided under EIR by Regulation 12(5)(e): confidentiality of commercial or industrial information. I am satisfied that the public interest is best served by withholding this information.

4. Mr Mairtin O'Mulleoir introduced Mr Rich Davey and Sean O'Brien to the Minister.

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