

23-Aug-2026

TO: HS2 FOI

CC: Greg Smith MP, Sarah Green MP, CNL (Planning)

FOI-26-6316 - COMPLAINT

Dear HS2,

I am dissatisfied with your response to this request. I do not believe that regulation 12(4)(d) is intended to allow public bodies to avoid their obligations to conduct their affairs transparently, and **I request an internal review**. The review group are obliged (ToR section 21) to

- Circulate draft meeting minutes for comment and any material discussed ... at the previous meeting within two weeks of the date of the meeting;
- Publish unless otherwise agreed by the Group the final agreed minutes of meetings on HS2 Ltd.'s website

and section 2 of the agenda for published minutes is generally a review of the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes for the two meetings in 2025 should therefore have been completed in time for the subsequent meetings, to comply with the ToR of the group. I note that no exemption under 12(4)(a), information not held, has been claimed.

We are thus left with the ridiculous suggestion that a 'safe space to work' is required for 20 months (in the case of the January 2025 meeting), to produce half a dozen pages of agreed minutes. This would represent remarkably slow progress, even by HS2 standards. It would seem more likely that the person who files the minutes is on holiday.

The review group administers a £3m fund *"to support the identification and delivery of local environmental integration and enhancement measures"*¹; this should be done transparently. It is most regrettable that the review group have chosen not to engage with the public during the peak of construction in the AoNB, and when final landscaping proposals² are being submitted. The group ought to be considering whether these proposals actually *"achieve an exemplar landscape design for the project"*, as was its remit. Is it ?

Regards,

Dr Jim Conboy

¹ Assurance, 29-Jan-2016

² PL/25/6639, PL/26/02545, Bucks planning