

Freedom of Information request 41-21

Request

1. Can you please set out how many FTE frontline communications staff/press officers there have been for each of the ten years to 2019/20. If an average number cannot be sourced, pick March as a snapshot.
 - 1b. How many FTE frontline communications staff/press officers were there in January (snapshot) 2021.
 - 1c. What was the annual cost of employing those frontline staff in all those years 2009/10 - 2019/20.
2. How many FTE frontline communications staff/press officers have been employed that have been outsourced, In other words, not in-house but external PR/communications supplied by a private company in all those years 2009/10 - 2019/20
 - 2b. How much was spent in those outsourced frontline PR/communications/press office functions, in other words, not in-house but external PR/communications supplied by a private company (as per Q4).

Clarification Received:

“Frontline communications staff” is a term used by the Scottish Government and other agencies to describe communications staff who would deal with the media

Response

NHS Borders does not employ dedicated press officers but as part of the Corporate Communications team this is a function that is provided. Staff members in the team have a wider remit including internal communication, web development, freedom of information, public engagement, and fundraising. We have included staff working in a Corporate Communications role whose responsibilities in their job description include dealing with the media over this time period.

- 1) The table below outlines the WTE of communications staff whose roles include dealing with the media in each of the ten years from 2011 to 2020, and also the cost of the staff over that period:

Year	WTE Staff	Annual Cost
2011	2.00	£75,468
2012	2.00	£76,751
2013	2.00	£108,281
2014	3.00	£105,668
2015	3.00	£108,091
2016	3.00	£110,615
2017	3.00	£114,805
2018	3.00	£117,183
2019	3.00	£120,612
2020	2.80	£118,185

- b) There was 2.80 WTE staff in these roles in January 2021.

- 2) NHS Borders has not outsourced any of these functions.

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, NHS Borders, Room 2EC3, Education Centre, Borders General Hospital, Melrose, TD6 9BS or foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk.

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **41-21** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.