

14 July 2023

Dear

### **Complaint in respect of ATISN 18591 - The Ban on the Use of Snares in Wales**

I wrote to you on 10 July to acknowledge receipt of your complaint about the handling of your freedom of information request in relation to the ban on the use of snares in Wales.

Your complaint focused on the decision to limit the scope of material being considered to the period from May 2021, which meant it did not encompass a recent consultation on the topic.

I have considered your complaint and have judged that it is partially upheld.

Your original request did not specify the time period you wished to request information in relation to. It did, however, refer specifically to decisions of, advice to and meetings with the Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales and Trefyndd.

On this basis, the team interpreted your request as relating specifically to that Ministerial portfolio, which came into being following the Senedd election in May 2021, and linked it to the inclusion of a commitment to ban snares in the Labour manifesto for that election. This was a narrower interpretation than you intended.

Although the timeframe being considered was referred to in our acknowledgement letter of 16 June 2023, and you did not raise a concern at that stage, I consider that writing to you specifically to request clarification of the timeframe you were interested in would have enabled the misunderstanding of scope to have been resolved before the response was prepared.

In terms of follow up action, I have asked the team to consider your original request for information request in relation to the period 1 January 2019 to May 2021. This covers the two years before the consultation was published and the consultation period itself, which you indicated was your particular interest in your letter of complaint. It is also consistent with the time period you have specified in response to a clarification request for your related, recent freedom of information request.

The team will provide a response to your original request covering the period 1 January 2019 to May 2021 by 4 August 2023.

More generally, I have reminded the team responsible to take the opportunity to clarify the scope of requests, where that is unclear, at the start of considering a request for information. I will also share this learning more broadly across the Environmental Sustainability Directorate.

Yours sincerely

Claire Bennett

Director of Environmental Sustainability