

13 November 2023

Dear

Complaint in respect of ATISN 19149 (not 19059)

Further to my acknowledgement letter of 31 October, I confirm that I've now completed my internal review of your Freedom of Information (FOI) request, ATISN 19149.

In your original FOI request of 11 October you asked the following questions:

1. "Before the Welsh Government brought in the 20 mph limit what were the areas it was trialed (sic) in;
2. After the trials were the residents in the trialed (sic) areas ever polled to see what the reaction was to the trial in their area;
3. If such a poll was done what were the results please by area"

In its response Welsh Government referred you to information that was already in the public domain, in relation to the introduction of 20mph, namely an earlier FOI request ref: ATISN 19059.

However, upon closer review, this appears to have only addressed your Question 1 above, re: the trial areas, but it did not explicitly answer your Questions 2 and 3, even though ATISN 19059 provided much more detailed information, on the 20mph introduction, than you had requested.

Consequently, on 25 October, you repeated your request for answers to Questions 2 and 3 by way of an internal review by Welsh Government. You further clarified your request on 2 November as follows, making reference to the paragraph numbers and questions raised in ATISN 19059, adding your additional comments in red:

"I wanted an answer to the following questions neither one is unreasonable however neither one was answered and I would like to know why

4. what public consultation took place pre- and post-trial? The 20mph public consultation was undertaken from July to October 2021, **there is no mention of any consultation after the trials took place**
6. what was the number of accidents at each trial location for the period of the 20mph trial and for the same period 12 months prior to the trial when the speed limit was 30mph. The data gathered from the trial area can be found in the **20-mph 1st Phase Interim Report. Note Question deliberately not answered/ avoided"**

From my review I note that you originally quite clearly framed your Questions 2 and 3 in the context of the "trial areas" only. However, rather than clearly state that residents **in the trial areas per se were not polled** for their opinions after the trial period, officials instead sought to highlight the wider attitudinal research that **had been undertaken** with the general public over various timescales, hence their reference to FOI 19059 and to the **20mph 1st Phase Interim Monitoring Report**, published in March 2023.¹

¹ [20mph 1st Phase Monitoring Report](#)

Unfortunately, this approach led you to conclude that Welsh Government had “deliberately not answered the question.” On reflection I don’t believe this was the case as following a summary review of **the 20mph 1st Phase Interim Monitoring Report**, I found references (on page 6) to “change in public attitudes to 20mph speed limit” as one of the Key Performance Indicators (KPI 5.1) where it also stated that it is too early to determine/report any change in public attitudes generally. On reflection, maybe it would have been better if officials had stated this more clearly in their response to you as well as sign-posting you to the availability of alternative attitudinal data. (As an aside you may wish to note that there is a further updated Monitoring Report, on the introduction of 20mph speed limit, due to be published in the coming months.)

As part of my review, policy officials further clarified that the focus of the research undertaken to date, including the trial areas, has been primarily to determine the efficacy of the introduction of 20mph in relation to: reduced air and noise pollution, reduced accidents and safety of pedestrians and road users alike, rather than the reaction of residents located in the trial areas. Accordingly, they referenced two Beaufort Reports², published in November 2020 and 2022.

Again, following a very quick review of the 2020 Beaufort document I found a section on “Views on speed limits and reaction to a 20mph speed limit” at Paragraph 3.2.2. However, to be clear, this does not provide the data that you were seeking as part of your initial FOI, as it relates to a national survey relating to wider matters, not restricted to 20mph and residents living in the trial areas.

Finally, turning to your clarification email of 2 November, I note that you reference Questions 4 and 6 of **FOI 19059**, that were not strictly part of your initial FOI. In Welsh Government’s response to this FOI, it referred the applicant to **20mph First Phase Interim Report**. As noted above, this report does not provide the specific information you requested in your FOI, however it does identify the reduction in the number of pedestrians and cyclists killed or seriously injured on the road network as a key performance indicator “KPI” going forward. The report goes on to note that as of March 2023, when the report was published, there had been insufficient data to assess this KPI, “as typically at least three years’ worth of collision data would be required.”

Following a thorough review of your FOI, I partially uphold your complaint as the response could have been clearer in stating at the outset that the Welsh Government does not hold the precise information that you requested.

If you remain dissatisfied with this response you also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

² <https://www.gov.wales/20mph-public-attitudes-research>

Tel: 01625 545 745
Fax: 01625 524 510
Email: casework@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Also, if you think that there has been maladministration in dealing with your request, you have the option to make a complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales who can be contacted at:

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae
Pencoed
Bridgend
CF35 5LJ

Telephone: 0845 6010987 (local rate)
Email: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Yours sincerely

Governance & Legislation Manager
Climate Change & Rural Affairs Group