

9 January 2024

Dear

Complaint in respect of ATISN 19237

Thank you for your request which was received by the Welsh Government on 7 December 2023.

I have considered your complaint in accordance with the procedure outlined in [Requesting information from the Welsh Government](#) which is available by post on request or via the internet.

I have concluded that your complaint has not been upheld, as the requests were combined to provide a single response, but not aggregated for the purpose of applying any exemption.

The application of Section 12 relates only to the request for correspondence, which as set out would exceed the appropriate limit. If you can narrow down your request, for example by providing specific details of the information you are seeking then we may be able to further consider your request.

The application of Section 22 relates to the request for details of meetings. Details of Ministerial meetings and engagements are published quarterly in arrears and which we aim to publish sometime in January. You will then be able to search for any meetings at the attached link: <https://gov.wales/ministerial-meetings-and-engagements>

I have set out at Annex A the appropriate exemptions which have been applied to each part of your request again, for reference.

Thank you for a copy of your request to the Scottish Government, which has been noted. If you remain dissatisfied with this response, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk

Yours sincerely

Part 1: request regarding correspondence.

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act allows a public authority to refuse a request if it calculates that dealing with it would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit specified for central government is £600. This represents the estimated cost of it taking over 24 hours of time to determine whether we hold the information and to thereafter locate, retrieve and extract it.

We do not record details of the religious affiliation of correspondents within our correspondence database. Therefore, the only way we could accurately provide the information requested would be to manually check the details of each item of correspondence received within this period. I have assessed that the combined total time to locate the information requested would therefore be over 50 hours.

Part 2: request regarding visits.

Details of ministers' meetings with external organisations and attendance at engagements are published quarterly in arrears at the following link:

<https://gov.wales/ministerial-meetings-and-engagements>.

I have therefore concluded that the information you requested is exempt under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act (2000), information intended for future publication. Details of Ministerial visits are published quarterly. This information will be published with the next tranche of information, which we aim to publish sometime in January 2024.

Section 22: Information intended for future publication.

The Welsh Government believes that Section 22 is applied in relation to the requested information. Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act is subject to the public interest test. This means that in order to withhold information under its provisions, any personal interest of the requester notwithstanding, it has to be shown that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs that in releasing it.

Public interest arguments in favour of disclosure

The general presumption of openness and transparency, which the Freedom of Information Act aspires to.

Public interest arguments against disclosure

This information is regularly published on a quarterly basis. It will be published along with other visits according to the usual schedule sometime in January 2024.

The Welsh Government acknowledges the public interest in openness and transparency, and therefore publishes details of Ministerial visits and engagements on a quarterly basis.

Therefore, we believe the public interest would be better served in the information being published at the appropriate time. To that end, I believe the information should be withheld under s22 of the Act, until it is published in due course at the following link:

<https://www.gov.wales/ministerial-meetings-and-engagements>