

18 December 2024

Dear

Internal Review into ATISN 21984 – Welsh Government Dublin Office Costs

Please see below the response to your complaint regarding the handling of your request for information (ATISN 21984 - Welsh Government Office Dublin Costs). The Internal Review process only applies to whether or not we have complied with our obligations under the Fol Act and my consideration and response only deals with this.

You have submitted further questions on this matter, and these will be dealt with in parallel to this review via ATISN 22139.

Questions 1 and 2

You have stated that, if the Welsh Government is unable to provide a Dublin specific proportion of the overseas budget, then you request that an internal review of this position is carried out. I can confirm that we are unable to provide this information.

I can confirm that, as stated in the Welsh Government's original response, the overseas budget of £4,684,400 is not allocated as an individual budget to each overseas office. This money covers the operational running costs of all of our 21 overseas offices and is drawn down by the offices when needed. Therefore, a total budget is not allocated in advance to the Dublin Office.

However, in your request you also asked for a full breakdown of how the 'Welsh Government in Ireland' total budget was spent (with costs broken down to show food and drink, venue hire, and entertainment). The Welsh Government's response stated that we did not hold this information. This is because, as stated above, the Welsh Government in Ireland does not have an individual budget that is allocated in advance. However, I believe that we could have provided some of the information mentioned in the request if we had interpreted your query to ask for the office's spend in the previous financial year. Some of this information could have been broken down where it relates to the costs attributed to food, drink, venue hire and entertainment. This information will be handled as part of your further request.

Question 3

I note you have asked if the Welsh Government can you confirm which of the events hosted by the office the £60,00 funding available to the office was spent on, and if the Welsh Government can confirm that the number of attendees listed per event does not include WG staff.

The aim of this review is to assess if your initial request for information was handled correctly and providing new information is out of the scope of this review. Your request for this additional information is being handled separately.

You have also stated that, if it is not possible to list the money spent on each event in the table provided under the response issued to Question 3, then you will request an internal review of this position. This question did not form part of your initial request for information under question 3, although there is some cross-over with the second element of question 2 (i.e. costs of food and drinks, venue hire and entertainment). This element of your request is being dealt with separately.

Question 4

I note that you disagree with the interpretation that the requested data could be classified as personal data, as you have requested the total resources spent on staff, and have requested that an internal review covers this request if we are unable to disclose the proportion of the overseas budget spent on staff based in Ireland.

Because there is such a small number of staff located in that office, we would not disclose salaries. However, I agree that we could disclose the overall total budget spent on staff in the office. This request will be handled separately, and this information will be shared with you.

Question 5

I note that you made a further query as to whether the Senior Business Development Executive based in Ireland has their salary paid for by the UK Government rather than the Welsh Government. As with the additional information you have requested, this internal review is unable to provide any further evidence. This further request is being dealt with separately.

Yours sincerely

Director – International Relations and Trade