



20 October 2021

Dear,

Request for Information – ATISN 15532

I wrote to you on 24 September regarding your request for information. You asked for the following information:

- 1) How many companies owned, part owned with China have received some form of government subsidy, funding or relief by the Welsh Government?
- 2) What correspondence have the Welsh Government had with companies owned, part owned with China?
- 3) What correspondence have the Welsh Government had with Chinese owned Wales & West Utilities?
- 4) What funding have the Welsh Government provided Chinese owned Wales & West Utilities?

Our response

I can confirm that we hold information relating to your request. As stated in my letter of 24 September as your request currently stands, I explained it will be very time consuming to deal with and asked you to refine your request and suggested ways for you to do so. Having not heard further from you I have considered your request as originally intended.

Requesting a broad scope of information as described without specifying a timeframe makes the search very difficult and time consuming. Not all the information is grouped in the same place as there are potentially dozens of departments and numerous members of staff of the Welsh Government that will have dealt with this subject matter. This would therefore encompass searching individual and team emails/letters/notes etc. across dozens of departments.

A substantial volume of the information requested is stored on our Electronic Document and Records Management System, known as iShare, and within Outlook e-mail accounts for individual officials. iShare is the corporate repository for the majority of information created and received by Welsh Government Officials in the course of their duties that must be retained for business or historical purposes. Further information about iShare can be found under Section 7 of our Information and Records Management policy, which is available on the Welsh Government [website](#).



Documents are saved on iShare using naming conventions appropriate to the effective recording of information for our own purposes. Setting our systems in this way, and in line with our Records Management policy, enables effective delivery and will not necessarily lend themselves to being easily interrogated for generic requests for information.

As you did not specify any company names or types, a general iShare search using the search terms 'companies owned with China' and 'Wales and West utilities' yielded over 10000 results. At an average estimate of one minute per result to check whether it is relevant to your request and then extracting the relevant information, it would take one official well in excess of 24hrs to complete the exercise. However it is very likely the work would extend beyond that timeframe with the various departments undertaking similar searches and when email searches are also taken into account by relevant staff members.

I have therefore concluded that it will cost more than the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 to deal with your request. I have therefore decided to refuse your request under Section 12 of the FoIA as to comply with it would exceed the appropriate limit.

However in the spirit of being helpful I am able to answer in parts some of your request.

For question 1, the information you have requested(for the last 5 years) is already in the public domain, please use the following link -

<https://record.senedd.wales/WrittenQuestion/83444>

For questions 2 and 3, this is refused for the reasons outlined above.

For question 4, please use the following link -

<https://record.senedd.wales/WrittenQuestion/83447s>

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ
or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales. Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above. You also 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. However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely