

4 August 2022

Dear _____,

ATISN 16432 – Cwmni Eginio

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 28 June 2022. You asked for:

1. What financial backing has been given or promised to Cwmni Eginio?
2. What remuneration do the five directors receive?
3. What are the staffing arrangements and associated costs at the registered office at Doc Fictoria, Caernarfon?
4. Is the company intended to act in future as a RAB counterparty company / intermediary between electricity companies and nuclear build development projects?
5. What proportion of Welsh Government funds will this project attract compared to other energy projects for Wales such as tidal power and offshore wind?

Our response

I apologise for the delay in our reply to you. The information you requested is as follows:

1. Financial backing for Cwmni Eginio?

£2.5m in total has been awarded for Phase 1 of Cwmni Eginio's work which is scheduled to conclude in March 2024.

Phase 1 in essence involves negotiating a lease from the landowners (the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority) and selecting the optimal technology and investors.

When the business case to set up Cwmni Eginio was agreed in August 2020, a further in principle amount of £20m was highlighted to support a potential Phase 2 activity – this is only an in principle offer and is subject to the further approval of a commercial case being made by Cwmni Eginio to WG.

2. What remuneration do the five directors receive?

I have established that Cwmni Eginio intend to publish this information in their next annual report. Under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act, information

intended for future publication is exempt information. My reasoning for applying this exemption is at annex 1 of this document.

3. Staffing arrangements and associated costs at the registered office at Doc Victoria, Caernarfon?

There are 4 staff members currently consisting the CEO, Head of Operations, Head of Stakeholder Engagement and a Business Manager. Staff work remotely and virtually - Doc Victoria is an office of convenience only and has no associated costs attached.

4. Is the company intended to act in future as a RAB counterparty company / intermediary between electricity companies and nuclear build development projects?

Cwmni Eginio will undoubtedly evolve and the company's future beyond Phase 1 will very much depend on the partners brought in to help take the entity into Phase 2.

5. What proportion of Welsh Government funds will this project attract compared to other energy projects for Wales such as tidal power and offshore wind?

Tidal technologies as well as wave have been supported and are priorities for Welsh Ministers. Welsh Government, through the ERDF Marine Energy Fund, has invested £105 million across 13 projects. In addition to this, research on consenting, and supply chain studies have also been carried out. In the last financial year, the Offshore Energy Alliance received £50,000 of support.

Next steps

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

Annex 1: Application of exemptions/exceptions

The Freedom of information Act/Environmental Information Regulations provide a right for anyone to ask a public authority to make requested information available to the wider public. As the release of requested information is to the world, not just the requester, public authorities need to consider the effects of making the information freely available to everybody. Any personal interest the requester has for accessing the information cannot override those wider considerations.

I have decided to withhold the following information:

- What remuneration do the five directors receive?

This Annex sets out the reasons for the engagement of section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act and our subsequent consideration of the Public Interest Test.

Engagement of section 22 (Information intended for future publication) of the Freedom of Information Act

The Welsh Government believes that the remuneration of the directors should be exempt from disclosure. A process was created to release this and other information within a contextual framework as part of the creation of Cwmni Egino, and harm could arise to this process if the information is released in a piecemeal fashion outside of that process.

Public Interest Test

In order to satisfy the public interest test in relation to the exemption(s), it is necessary to conclude that the public interest arguments in favour of withholding the information are sufficient to *outweigh* the public interest arguments in favour of release.

Public interest arguments in favour of disclosure

There is a clear public interest in the openness and transparency of the operation of government, and in understanding the remuneration arrangements of a board of directors in a company such as Cwmni Egino. This is for purposes of public accountability.

Public interest arguments in favour of withholding

As described above, there is a risk of harm to the process of publishing full information, checked and set within the context of all related finances and matters, if some details of the intended publication (i.e, remuneration arrangements) are released outside of that process. This would then be likely to lead to a requirement to understand the remaining contextual information, some of which remains in preparation ahead of the next annual report. It is not in the public interest that the process be derailed by premature publication of the information.

Balance of public interest test

I find that the public interest in favour of disclosing is very strong, and that there are good reasons why this information should be placed in the public domain. Nevertheless those reasons do not imply that the information should be available in the public domain now, rather than at the intended publication date. For the public interest to favour disclosure now, there would need to be some reason that compels an early publication. In the absence of any such considerations, I find that the public interest favours withholding the information at this time.