

8 February 2023

Dear

ATISN 16894 - Various

Thank you for your freedom of information request which was received by the Welsh Government on 21 November 2022. We have interpreted your email as a request for the following information:

1. Minimum Price for Alcohol - *“What is the cost of the contracts?”*
2. Increase in number of Members of the Senedd – *“Will these extra hangers on qualify for second homes if they live more than a mile from the Senedd?”*
3. Votes for 16 and 17 year olds – *“When was the consultation? How many people voted?”*
4. Youth Parliament – *“Would you please explain purpose and cost of youth parliament? How are they appointed? Is it on political views?”*
5. Referendum on establishment of the National Assembly for Wales
6. FM visiting Qatar for the World Cup – *“What was cost of this?”*

Your request has been handled under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). It's important to note that FOIA gives individuals a right of access to recorded information held by a public authority at the time the request was received. It does not require an authority such as the Welsh Government to provide views or opinions where those views are not already recorded. This is confirmed by the Information Commissioner's guidance 'The Guide to Freedom of Information', page 7:

“The Act does not cover information that is in someone's head. If a member of the public asks for information, you only have to provide information you already have in recorded form. You do not have to create new information or find the answer to a question from staff who may happen to know it.”

With that in mind, our responses to your questions are at **Annex A**.

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.

The request you sent me contains personal information about you - for example, your name and address. The Welsh Government will be the controller for this information and, in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, it will be processed in order to fulfil our public task and meet our legal obligations under the Act to provide you with a response. We will only use this personal information to deal with your request and any matters which arise as a result of it. We will keep your personal information and all other information relating to your request for three years from the date on which your request is finally closed. Your personal information will then be disposed of securely.

Under data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data we hold about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection

For further information about the information which the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you wish to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ
Email: DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales

Any information released under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or Environmental Information Regulations 2004 will be listed in the Welsh Government's Disclosure Log (at <https://gov.wales/freedom-of-information-responses>).

Yours sincerely

Annex A - Response

1. Minimum Price for Alcohol - “at what expense is this costing us?”

We have interpreted this to be a request for the contract costs for the evaluation of the Minimum Unit for Pricing policy

These are as follows:

Lot 1 - £76,740

Lot 2 - £103,567 (the contract value at award was £97,384, but a contract variation was agreed for extra work for recruitment for the interim stage (£6,183) so the total contract value has increased to £103,567)

Lot 3 - £79,815

Lot 4 - £111,834 (the contract value at award was £86,834. An extension was agreed for an additional wave of interviews (£25,000), so the total contract value has increased to £111,834).

2. “Will these extra hangers on qualify for second homes if they live more than a mile from the Senedd?”

Welsh Government does not hold recorded information of this description. Financial support and remuneration for Members of the Senedd is determined by the Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd, and is not within the remit of the Welsh Government.

3. Votes for 16 and 17 year olds – “where was consultation taken place? how many people voted?”

We have interpreted this to be a request for when the consultation took place and how many people voted in the last Senedd elections.

The consultation on the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill ran online from 31 January 2017 to 11 April 2017. With regards to the number of people who have voted in previous elections, based on valid votes (spoilt or disallowed ballot papers excluded), the turnout was 46.6%. Additionally, turnout for the 2022 local government elections in Wales was 38.8%.

4. Youth Parliament – “Would you please explain purpose and cost of youth parliament? How are they appointed? Is it on political views?”

Welsh Government does not hold recorded information of this description. The Youth Parliament is a matter for the Senedd Commission not Welsh Government. The link to the Youth Parliament pages is here: <https://youthparliament.senedd.wales/about/>.

5. Referendum on establishment of the National Assembly for Wales

Welsh Government does not hold recorded information of this description. As mentioned in the reply to your first email on 3 November 2022, the referendum was held in accordance with the law and we have nothing we can add on this point.

6. FM visiting Qatar for the World Cup - “What was cost of this?”

Full details of the First Minister’s visit to Qatar will be published via the annual publication of Ministerial overseas travel, in accordance with the Ministerial Code. The information for the financial year 2022/2023 will be published after March.

Some information that may be of interest is already available in the public domain. Information has been published in response to ATISN 16831 and can be found here: [FOI release 16831: World Cup | GOV.WALES](#).

The First Minister has also issued a written statement, which can be found here: <https://gov.wales/written-statement-ministerial-overseas-visit-qatar-0>.

For the remainder of this element of your request, I have 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 overseas and gifts are published in line with the Ministerial code and this information will be published with the next tranche of information in 2023. Details of Ministerial gifts are also published as part of the same information.

Section 22 is a publicly tested exemption and I have set out my arguments for non-disclosure at **Annex 1** to this letter.

Annex 1

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 published as a requirement in the Ministerial code. This information will be published along with details of other Ministerial visits overseas according to the usual schedule. The information for the financial year 22/23 will be published after March next year.

The Welsh Government acknowledges the public interest in openness and transparency, and it is a long-standing requirement that details of Ministerial visits overseas, including the costs, are published in line with the Ministerial code.

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://gov.wales/ministerial-code-information-publication-5th-assembly>.