

20 April 2023

Dear

ATISN 17307 – The Deputy Minister's meeting with WRU

Thank you for your request which I received on 21 March 2023. You asked for:

- confirmation whether the 30 March 2022 meeting between the Deputy Minister Dawn Bowden and WRU happened on the Senedd estate,
- any minutes taken for the meeting, and
- emails from the secretary or official who arranged the meeting.

Our response

The 30 March 2022 meeting between the Deputy Minister Dawn Bowden and WRU took place virtually on Microsoft Teams, not on the Senedd estate.

The requested minutes and emails are attached in the Annexes below. For reference I have included a table with links to each item:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Annex 1 | Minutes of 30 March meeting |
| Annex 2 | Emails arranging meeting |

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: Minutes from the 30 March 2022 meeting between the Deputy Minister Dawn Bowden and WRU

Meeting with Deputy Minister and WRU 1.00pm 30th March 2022

Present

Dawn Bowden, Deputy Minister
Steve Phillips, CEO WRU
Neil Welch, Head of Sport (Notetaker)

Agenda

- i. WRU Loan
- ii. Women's Game
- iii. Mixed Rugby Consultation
- iv. Match Day experience

WRU Loan

Steve Phillips thanked the Deputy Minister for the support the Welsh Government following the completion of £18m loan. WRU has received payment and will distribute to the regions. The Deputy Minister

Women's Game

The Deputy Minister congratulated the WRU on the award of a number of full time professional contracts to around 12 players and retained contracts to a separate group. She stated that as a 15 a side game it would have been preferable to have more full-time contracts but acknowledged that it was a positive start to a new era. The WRU agreed with this and stated it was their intention to review the numbers and hopefully increase in number going forward.

The Deputy Minister noted this was already making a difference on the pitch following the excellent away win in Dublin the previous weekend, and asked that her congratulations be passed onto the team for the win and the performance against Ireland. She also wished the team the very best for the upcoming games, including the game against Scotland at the Arms Park on Saturday (2 April).

Mixed rugby consultation

Following representations by a number of parents the WRU had decide to undertake a further consultation on its plans to reduce the age for mixed rugby. The Deputy Minister expressed her support for this and asked that they share their findings with WG, when appropriate.

Match day experience review of Six Nations

The Deputy Minister asked that following the issues encountered on match days during the Autumn Series would a similar review be carried now the Six Nations had concluded. The WRU responded that there would be but given there had been very few incidents and much better press coverage they were not expecting any adverse findings. They put this down to changes to selling alcohol, and agreed to discuss any issues with officials.

Annex 2: Emails arranging the meeting

Two email chains were found relating to arranging the meeting. Note: personal details (email addresses and phone numbers) have been redacted.

Email chain one:

From: Roberts, Steffan (ETC - Culture, Sport & Tourism - Programme & Policy) <[Personal information, redacted]>
Sent: 22 March 2022 19:26
To: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Cc: Welch, Neil (ETC - Culture, Sport & Tourism - Sports Policy) <[Personal information, redacted]>
Subject: RE: Meeting with Steve Phillips, WRU

Let's go for 1 – 1.30 then, thanks. I can cover from our side.

From: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Sent: 22 March 2022 16:55
To: Roberts, Steffan (ESNR - Tourism, Heritage & Sport - Tourism & Marketing) <[Personal information, redacted]>; DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Cc: Welch, Neil (ESNR - Tourism, Heritage & Sport - Culture & Sport) <[Personal information, redacted]>
Subject: RE: Meeting with Steve Phillips, WRU

Thanks Steff. DM would prefer 30 mins sorry. Could Steve make either 10:45 – 11:15 or 13:00 – 13:30 on Wednesday 30 March instead, please?

Thanks,
[Personal information, redacted]

[Personal information, redacted]

Diary Secretary to Dawn Bowden MS / Ysgrifennydd Dyddiadur Dawn Bowden AS

**Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and Chief Whip / Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Welsh Government / Llywodraeth Cymru
Cardiff Bay / Bae Caerdydd**

[Personal information, redacted]

From: Roberts, Steffan (ESNR - Tourism, Heritage & Sport - Tourism & Marketing) <[Personal information, redacted]>
Sent: 22 March 2022 16:20
To: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Cc: Welch, Neil (ESNR - Tourism, Heritage & Sport - Culture & Sport) <[Personal information, redacted]>

information, redacted]>

Subject: RE: Meeting with Steve Phillips, WRU

Steve has a full afternoon but has offered 15mins at 1.30pm. I think that should be fine if DM is content we can squeeze in all in that time.

From: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>

Sent: 22 March 2022 14:05

To: Roberts, Steffan (ESNR - Tourism, Heritage & Sport - Tourism & Marketing) <[Personal information, redacted]>; DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>

Cc: Welch, Neil (ESNR - Tourism, Heritage & Sport - Culture & Sport) <[Personal information, redacted]>

Subject: RE: Meeting with Steve Phillips, WRU

Hi Steff,

Thanks for this. Thursday would be best for the DM if that's okay?

She has availability any time between 12:45 – 14:45. Let me know if any issues with these timings and I will try move things around to accommodate.

Thanks,

[Personal information, redacted]

[Personal information, redacted]

Diary Secretary to Dawn Bowden MS / Ysgrifennydd Dyddiadur Dawn Bowden AS

Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and Chief Whip / Dirprwy Weinidog y

Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip

Welsh Government / Llywodraeth Cymru

Cardiff Bay / Bae Caerdydd

[Personal information, redacted]

From: Roberts, Steffan (ESNR - Tourism, Heritage & Sport - Tourism & Marketing) <[Personal information, redacted]>

Sent: 22 March 2022 13:52

To: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>

Cc: Welch, Neil (ESNR - Tourism, Heritage & Sport - Culture & Sport) <[Personal information, redacted]>

Subject: Meeting with Steve Phillips, WRU

Hi [Personal information, redacted]

DM would like a follow-up meeting with Steve having met him briefly yesterday.

Can you give me a couple of options and I'll liaise with Steve on his availability?

Steff

Steffan Roberts

Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr – Datblygu Twristiaeth a Chwaraeon
Deputy Director – Tourism Development and Sport

Llywodraeth Cymru | Welsh Government
Ffôn | Tel.: [Personal information, redacted]
Symudol | Mob: [Personal information, redacted]
e-bost: | Email: [Personal information, redacted]

Hapus i gyfathrebu yn y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg / Happy to communicate in Welsh or English

Email chain two:

From: Dawn Bowden (Ministerial) <[Personal information, redacted]>
Sent: 22 March 2022 16:53
To: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Subject: RE: Meeting with Steve Phillips, WRU

Ok, I would think 30 minutes would be better.

Dawn Bowden MS/AS

Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and Chief Whip / Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau
a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Welsh Government / Llywodraeth Cymru
Cardiff Bay / Bae Caerdydd

From: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Sent: 22 March 2022 16:46
To: Dawn Bowden (Ministerial) <[Personal information, redacted]>; DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Subject: RE: Meeting with Steve Phillips, WRU

No problem – would you like us to hold off for now or try offer him a longer slot on Wednesday with the intention that you will hopefully meet with Tonia before that?

Thanks,
[Personal information, redacted]

[Personal information, redacted]

Diary Secretary to Dawn Bowden MS / Ysgrifennydd Dyddiadur Dawn Bowden AS

**Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and Chief Whip / Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Welsh Government / Llywodraeth Cymru
Cardiff Bay / Bae Caerdydd**

[Personal information, redacted]

From: Dawn Bowden (Ministerial) <[Personal information, redacted]>
Sent: 22 March 2022 16:45
To: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Subject: RE: Meeting with Steve Phillips, WRU

Yes ok, although I don't yet know what Tonia wants to say which I would probably need to add to the discussion.

Dawn Bowden MS/AS

Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and Chief Whip / Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Welsh Government / Llywodraeth Cymru
Cardiff Bay / Bae Caerdydd

From: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Sent: 22 March 2022 16:41
To: Dawn Bowden (Ministerial) <[Personal information, redacted]>
Cc: DS Deputy Minister for Arts and sport, and Chief Whip <[Personal information, redacted]>
Subject: FW: Meeting with Steve Phillips, WRU

Minister,
Are you happy for your meeting with Steve to just be 15 mins next Thursday?

Thanks,
[Personal information, redacted]

[Personal information, redacted]

Diary Secretary to Dawn Bowden MS / Ysgrifennydd Dyddiadur Dawn Bowden AS

Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and Chief Whip / Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau a Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Welsh Government / Llywodraeth Cymru
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[Dirprwy Gyfarwyddwr – Datblygu Twristiaeth a Chwaraeon](#)

Deputy Director – Tourism Development and Sport

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Ffôn | Tel.: [Personal information, redacted]

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