

24th March 2025

Dear

ATISN 24497 Squirrelpox vaccine

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 6th March 2025. You asked for:

1. The terms set defining the specific scope and required outputs of the feasibility study.
2. Where and when the invitation to tender for the work was advertised.
3. Who was awarded the contract.
4. What is the deadline for contract delivery.

You asked for this information as of 6th March 2025.

Our response

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, I have established that the information you requested in points 2, 3, and 4 is not held by the Welsh Government.

By way of clarification:

2. The invitation to tender has not been advertised.
3. The contract has not been awarded.
4. The deadline for contract delivery is yet to be determined.

Information requested in point 1. is exempt under Regulation 12(4)(d) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 - Material in the course of completion, unfinished documents, and incomplete data - and is therefore withheld. The reasons for applying this exception is set out in full at Annex A to this letter.

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 A

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:

1. The terms set defining the specific scope and required outputs of the feasibility study

This Annex sets out the reasons for the engagement of section 12(4)(d) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and our subsequent consideration of the Public Interest Test.

Engagement of regulation 12(4)(d) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (Material in the course of completion, unfinished documents, and incomplete data) of the Freedom of Information Act.

The Welsh Government believes that the information above, which is information relating to a procurement that has not yet been advertised and may be subject to change, should be exempt from disclosure. This is because the information requested is not yet finalised and it will form part of a contract for an external supplier. Releasing such information prior to the tender being advertised risks putting incorrect terms and scope into the public domain, and would also be likely to prejudice the fair conduct of the tender process itself.

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

Welsh Government is committed to openness and transparency in this matter, and we recognise that there is a public interest in knowing what the terms of reference will be of the feasibility study, which refers to the conduct of public policy in an area of public interest.

Public interest arguments in favour of withholding

The preservation of the integrity of the procurement process is a matter of public interest, as it would not be in the public interest were such a process a matter of

challenge after the letting of any contract, owing to a failure to follow procurement rules and best practice.

Furthermore it is not in the public interest that this information be placed in the public domain while it remains subject to amendment and change, as the information would be misleading to the public, including to suppliers, who may spend resources in preparing for a tender that has not been advertised, and may not be advertised in the published format.

Balance of public interest test

Although the public interest in the information is a strong one, I note that the information that remains in the course of completion will constitute a tender that will be advertised to registered suppliers at [Sell2Wales](#) when it is complete. The public interest is therefore met in that the information will be released in due course. There is not a strong public interest in releasing the provisional, and possibly incorrect information ahead of that time. I therefore find that the public interest favours withholding the information at this time.