

31 March 2025

Dear

ATISN 24552 – Welsh Government Dublin Office

Thank you for your request for information which I received on 05 March.

In your email you have asked a number of additional questions following the response to ATISN 22139. This relates to the work of the Welsh Government office in Dublin and staff within the International Relations Team. Some of the requested information falls within the scope of the Freedom of Information Act and some falls outside of it. I have summarised your separate requests below as:

Request 1 – Staff costs

- Can you confirm if the £270,800 is staff costs alone?
- If the £270,800 is spent on salary costs alone, what is the level of pay increment that the staff receive compared to the standard salary rate?

Request 2 – Platform charges paid to the UK Government

- What were the total platform charges that the Welsh Government paid to the British Government for the previous financial year?

Request 3 – Accommodation costs

- Does the Welsh Government have any say over the costs of accommodation or is this down to the FCDO?

Request 4 – UK Government Representation at Welsh Government Events in Ireland

- Can you confirm whether there was representation from the British Government in attendance at the ‘British Irish Chamber of Commerce Investor Dinner’ and ‘Cork Chamber dinner’ events?

Request 5 – Spending on Events in Ireland

- How much has the Welsh Government spent on events associated with the Welsh music artist in Ireland, in total? How was he selected given that his work appears to have no direct association with either Ireland or Wales?

Request 6 – Advertising of posts

- Who was eligible for the advertised overseas roles? Were they available to all in the Welsh Civil Service?

Request 7 – Spending on Events in Ireland

- How much taxpayer money was spent on sending the Head of International Relations to his business trips outside Wales in total over the past financial year? Please include all travel, accommodation, and subsistence costs.

Request 8 – Diplomatic rank

- Can you confirm whether staff overseas are in fact “diplomats” and, if so, what is their internationally recognised diplomatic rank? If not, what action will be taken to correct this misreporting?

Response

I have set out the responses to the individual requests below.

Request 1 – Staff costs

The £270,800 staff cost figure includes payments associated with staff pay, social security, Cost of Living Allowance, pension costs, payroll management, operational T&S and medical costs in line with NHS coverage.

Welsh Government overseas staff receive pay increments in line with Wales-based staff and Country Based Staff are subject to FCDO terms and conditions.

Request 2 – Platform charges paid to the UK Government

The total platform charges paid to the UK Government for the overseas network in 2023/24 was £704,510.72.

Request 3 – Accommodation costs

Welsh Government staff accommodation is identified and allocated by the FCDO based on UK Government policies.

Request 4 – UK Government Representation at Welsh Government Events in Ireland

No recorded information is held about UK Government attendees at these events.

Request 5 – Spending on Events in Ireland

No further recorded information is held by the Welsh Government on these matters. The artist costs and selection process by the event organisers have already been provided.

Request 6 – Advertising of posts

All overseas job roles are advertised internally on a lateral basis and all eligible staff would have been able to apply for the roles. Eligibility is determined by the applicant's existing grade and the successful applicant is appointed based on a fair and open competition, which is in line with Civil Service recruitment policies.

Request 7 – Spending on Events in Ireland

In this financial year (up to 28 February 2025), the Head of International Relations has undertaken a total of seven business trips outside of Wales. Five of these were to London, one to Japan and one to the USA. A total of £6,374.33 was spent on travel, accommodation and subsistence across these seven business trips.

Request 8 – Diplomatic Rank

The members of staff referred to in the question have diplomatic ranks of First Secretary and Second Secretary. A diplomatic rank is conferred upon Welsh Government staff

through their registration by the FCDO with the relevant host country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (or equivalent) when they take up an overseas post.

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 e-mail: 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
Telephone: 0303 123 1113
Website: www.ico.org.uk

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely