

4 June 2025

Dear

ATISN 24766 Freedom of Information request about community and town councils

Thank you for your request which I received on 2 June 2025.

You asked for information about the total costs of conducting two pieces of work into community and town councils. **Question 1a** related to the consultation on the role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector. **Question 1b** related to the Democratic Health Report into Community and Town Councils.

You also asked who in the Welsh Government instructed the Auditor General for Wales about the approach used to audit public money (**question 2**) and how long the Welsh Government expected taxpayers to put up with the non-compliance of community and town councils when spending public money (**question 3**).

Your final question (**4**) was regarding the date on which the Welsh Government would be responding about which path it would follow, in response to the democratic health report into community and town councils.

Our response

We do not hold data in relation to Question 1a as this work was conducted by the Local Government and Housing Committee within the Senedd. You may wish to contact them at the following email address: contact@senedd.wales.

The cost in producing the Democratic Health Report including engagement, research and publication (Question 1b) was **£16,888.09**.

The Auditor General for Wales is independent from the Welsh Government and receives his powers from the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004. This Act provides the statutory basis for the Auditor General's audit and inspection functions. It is the Auditor General who sets out the detailed audit arrangements for community councils. The current regime was established after a [consultation](#) in 2020 designed to be more rigorous in identifying areas for improvement.

There has been a substantial amount of work looking at the community and town council sector, through the Audit Wales report, Local Government and Housing Committee inquiry and the Democratic Health Report. You may wish to note the recent Senedd Debate on the Local Government and Housing Committee report: The role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector on 21 May with a transcript of this debate available on the link below;

<https://record.senedd.wales/Plenary/15109#A97061>

In responding to this debate, the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government outlined that it is now for the Welsh Government to determine the appropriate action(s) to be taken and the appropriate timeline noting that given the time to thoroughly evaluate and decide on actions for the sector, that this will need the next Government's consideration.

Data processing

The request you sent me contains personal information about you - for example, your name and address. The Welsh Government will be the data processor 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/about/open-government/freedom-of-information/responses/?lang=en>).

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

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